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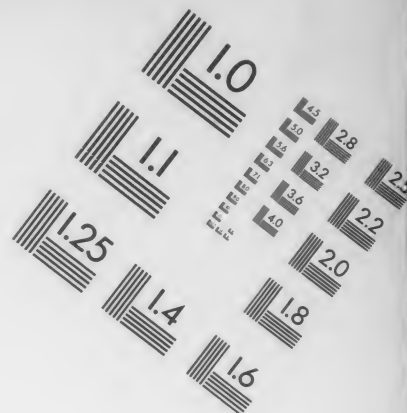
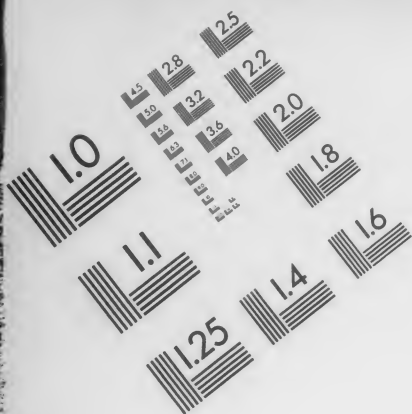


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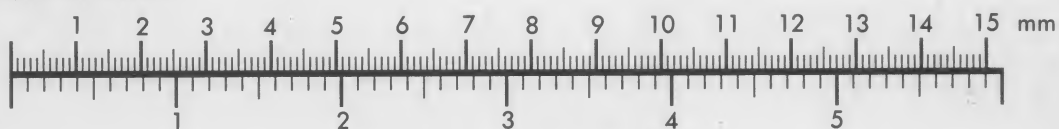
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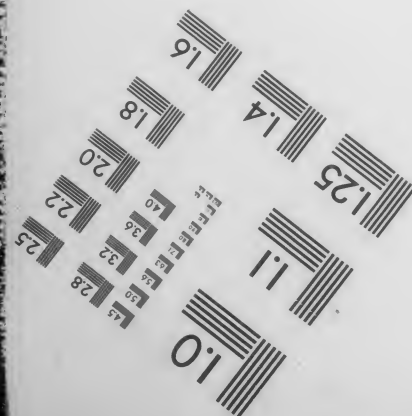
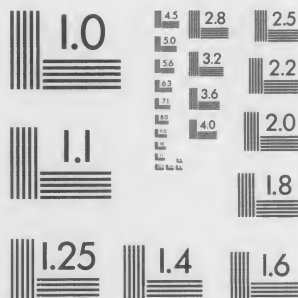
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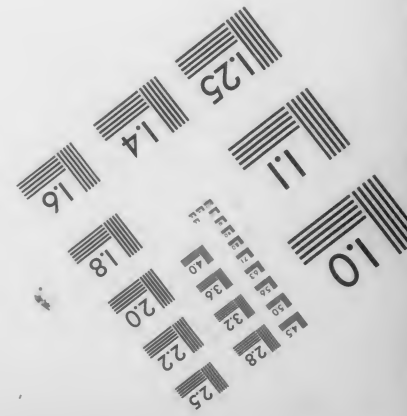
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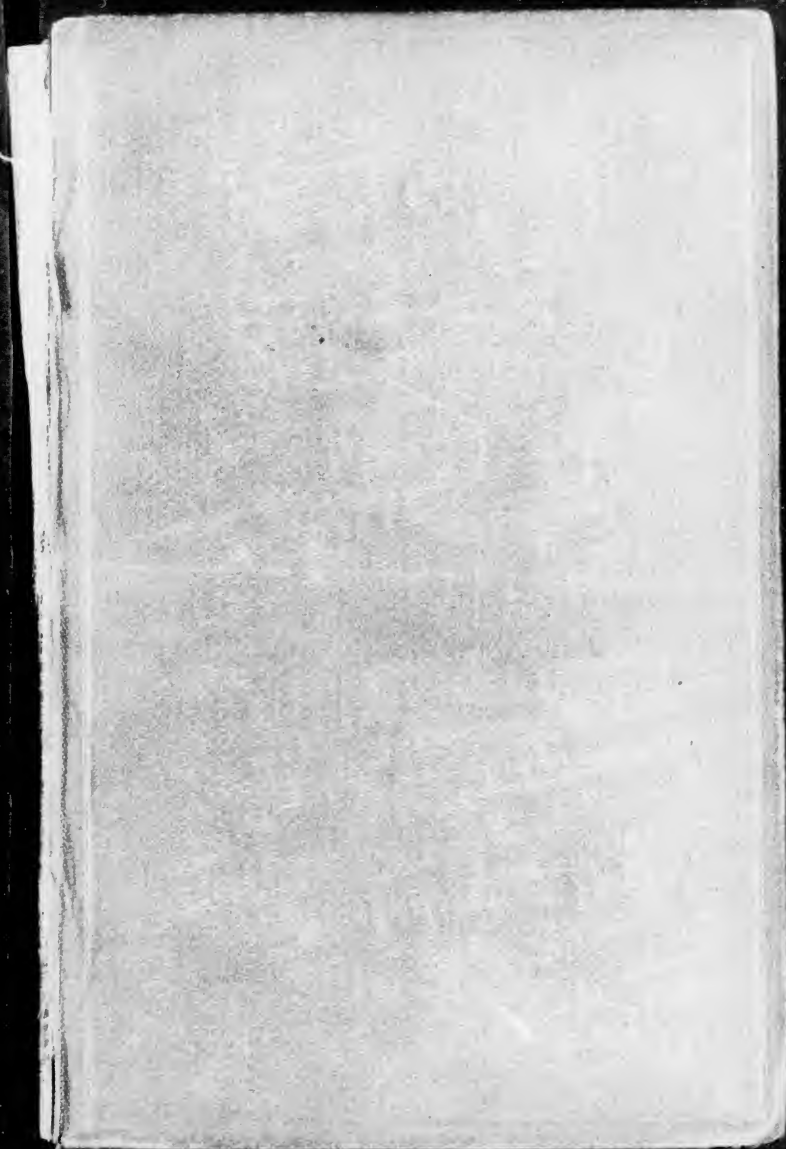
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A HISTORY OF ENGLAND

GROWTH OF DEMOCRACY

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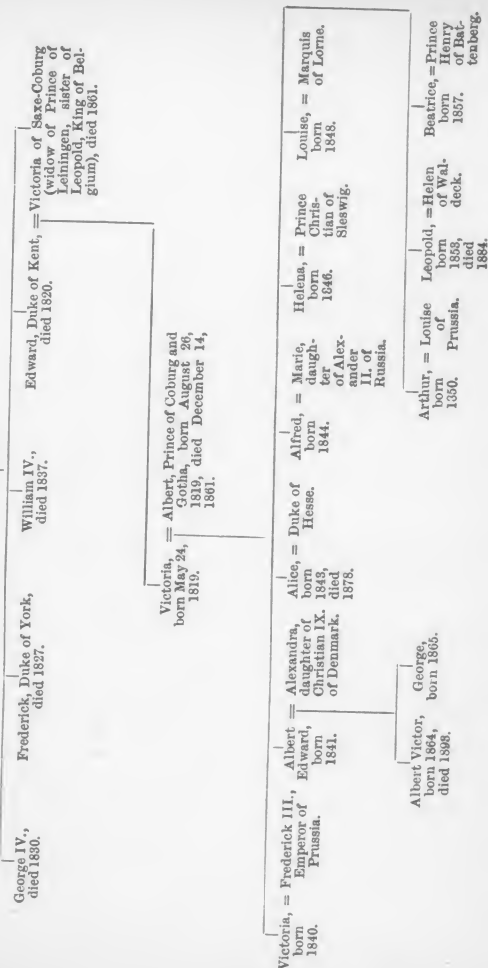
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GEORGE III.



CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

France.

Louis Philippe, 1830.
Lamartine (President), 1848.
Louis Napoleon (President), 1849.
Louis Napoleon (Emperor), 1852.
Thiers (President), 1870.
MacMahon (President), 1873.
Grévy (President), 1879.

Austria.

Ferdinand, 1835.
Francis Joseph, 1848.

Prussia.

Frederick William III., 1797.
Frederick William IV., 1840.
William, 1861.

Russia.

Nicholas, 1825.
Alexander II., 1855.

Denmark.

Frederick VI., 1808.
Christian VIII., 1839.
Frederick VII., 1848.
Christian IX., 1863.

Sweden and Norway.

Charles XIV., 1818.
Oscar I., 1844.
Charles XV., 1859.
Oscar II., 1872.

Spain.

Isabella, 1833.
Alfonso XII., 1874.

Portugal.

Maria, 1834.
Pedro V., 1853.
Louis, 1861.

Belgium.

Leopold I., 1831.
Leopold II., 1865.

Holland.

William I., 1814.
William II., 1840.
William III., 1849.

Italy.

Victor Emmanuel, 1849.
Humbert, 1878.

Greece.

Otho, 1833.
George, 1863.

Bavaria.

Louis I., 1825.
Maximilian II., 1848.
Louis II., 1864.

Turkey.

Mahmoud II., 1808.
Abdul Medjid, 1839.
Abdul Aziz, 1861.
Abdul Hamed, 1876.

Popes.

Gregory XVI., 1831.
Pius IX., 1846.
Leo XIII., 1878.

VICTORIA.

CHAPTER I.

LORD MELBOURNE'S MINISTRY, May 12, 1835.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Melbourne.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Cottenham, January 1836 (before that in Commission).
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Lansdowne.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Duncannon.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Spring Rice.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Lord John Russell.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Glenelg.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Palmerston.
<i>Secretary at War,</i>	Lord Howick.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Lord Minto.
<i>President of the Board of Control,</i>	Sir John Cam Hobhouse.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Poulett Thomson.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Lord Holland.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Lord Lichfield.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Mulgrave.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Plunket.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Lord Morpeth.

The following changes took place in 1839:—

<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Francis Baring.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Lord Normanby (Lord Mulgrave).
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord John Russell.
<i>Secretary at War,</i>	Mr. Babington Macaulay.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Henry Labouchere.
<i>Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,</i>	Lord Ebrington.

In 1840 Lord Clarendon became Lord Privy Seal, and Lord Duncannon First Commissioner of Land Revenue.

In 1841 Lord Fortescue became Lord Lieutenant for Ireland, and Lord Campbell became Lord Chancellor for a few weeks.

THE two years which intervened between the failure of Peel's attempt to establish a Conservative government and the accession of Queen Victoria, are occupied by a piece of parliamentary history of a remarkable character. The King was in almost open hostility to his ministers; the enthusiasm which had attended the Reform Bill was fading away; the strife of parties

VICT.

23

A

was resuming its old form. The Whigs, to whom, as the accredited leaders of liberal thought, the guidance of the great movement had been intrusted, were reaping the bitter fruit of the exaggerated hopes that they had raised but could not fulfil. Unable to free themselves from their traditions as a great constitutional party, their half-measures satisfied neither the ardent desires of the people nor the conservative feelings of the propertied classes, to which they really belonged; and the result was a practical annihilation of government, both in its legislative and administrative functions. Such strength as the Government possessed was due to its alliance with the Radicals and the Irish. At the head of the Irish members was Daniel O'Connell, and so many of them were either personally connected with their chief, or owed their seats so entirely to his influence, that they were commonly spoken of by the opprobrious title of "O'Connell's Tail." But the Government, as far at least as its head, Lord Melbourne, and its more important members were concerned, was far from being Radical. Even Lord John Russell was less advanced in his views than many people supposed. It had been proved by Peel's short Ministry, in 1835, that this very moderate Government was at the time the only possible one. But to keep its place it had to pick its way cautiously between its own wishes and the more extreme objects advocated by its half hostile supporters, the Radicals and the Irish.

Such a Government is of necessity weak. Though it can command a majority on vital points, it is constantly compelled to modify its measures, and it even runs the risk of losing them if it offends either of the sections on which its power practically depends. In its *personnel* there was still further cause of weakness. The Premier and several of the more important ministers were in the Upper House. Nor could Lord John Russell and his colleagues in the Lower House pretend to rival in power of debate or parliamentary management the predominant personality of Sir Robert Peel, supported as it now was by the ability of Stanley and Graham, the late deserters from the Liberal camp. But Peel's predominance affected his supporters as well as his opponents. Understanding the impossibility of undoing the work of the Reform Bill, he had placed himself in a new position. Though opposed to Radical and hasty reform, he accepted not only the constitutional changes already made, but even the position that within the limits of the Constitution wise and measured progress was desirable. The skill with which he had maintained his ground during his short tenure

The consequent weakness of the Government.

of power in 1835 had obliged even the unwavering Tories of the old school to accept him as their indispensable leader. Kicking somewhat against the pricks, they as yet submissively followed him. He thus commanded a minority consisting of men of both extreme and moderate Tory principles, sufficiently strong to oblige the Government to be very careful in making any concessions to its Radical supporters. As far as the House of Commons therefore was concerned, the vigour of the Government was curtailed on both sides. Any step of too liberal a character was prevented by the minority, which, from its liberal propensities, might easily draw to itself moderate men of all parties, and become a majority; any measure not sufficiently pronounced in Liberalism might induce the Radicals to withdraw their support, and the ministerial majority might be thus destroyed. But the real efficiency of the Ministry was still more completely nullified by the balance which existed between the two Houses of Parliament. In the Upper House the Opposition commanded a certain majority, so strong in numbers that it was impossible to get rid of it by the only method the Government had at its disposal,—the creation of Peers. It was only on the good sense of the Lords, and their probable dread of breaking entirely with the Commons, that any hope of passing ministerial measures could be based.

The Opposition in a majority in the Lords.

Yet the circumstances of the country were not such as to make a deadlock of this sort at all desirable. Many questions of supreme importance were pressing for settlement. Affairs in Spain were in a most critical condition, it seemed as though the policy of Lord Palmerston, and the support he had given to the Queen's faction there, was likely to result in failure. Ireland, the unceasing difficulty of English politics, was in an excited condition. The position of the English Church was seriously assaulted by the Dissenters. Canada was on the verge of rebellion. And a financial crisis was shaking the credit of the kingdom. The Ministry seemed on the point of sinking under its accumulated difficulties. Of three great Bills for the amelioration of Ireland, the Municipal Corporation Bill, the Tithe Bill, and the Poor Law Bill, not one had passed the two Houses. On a Bill for changing the character of Church rates the Government had been defeated. There seemed no possibility of the Ministry extricating itself from its impotent position except by a dissolution, which might possibly give it such an overwhelming majority in the Lower House as to counteract the obstruction in the Lords. But there was no ground for dis-

Many great questions awaiting settlement.

solution; there was already a majority for Government in the Commons; the King was entirely opposed to such an idea, and rejoiced at the difficulties of his ministers, and, as was well known, would at once have snatched at an offer of resignation on their part.

The death of the King (June 20, 1837), and the accession of the young Queen Victoria, rendering a new Parliament necessary, came to the assistance of the harassed Whigs. The elections restored them to power, the friendship of the Queen removed one source of their weakness, and they were able to struggle on for some years longer. The accession of Victoria thus forms no epoch in our history. The hands of the Ministry were strengthened by the removal of the hostility of the Crown, but, with this exception, no important change took place; the government was continued in the same hands, upon the same lines, and with the same party difficulties as during the reign of her predecessor.

The young Queen had been brought up in considerable retirement by her mother, the Duchess of Kent, between whom and the late King there had been some estrangement. But young as she was, she at once displayed a propriety and dignity of conduct which won all hearts, and appeared to be of the happiest augury. It was plain that she would want little more than friendly guidance; and that guidance Lord Melbourne was well fitted to give her. He surrounded her with constant and watchful care, which there is every reason to believe was wholly disinterested, and there sprang up between him and the new sovereign a mutual respect and affection which never wavered. At the same time the political lessons of a Whig minister could not fail to have their influence, and to conduce largely to the constitutional character which has marked the reign.

As a change of sovereigns rendered the dissolution of Parliament within six months necessary, it was thought desirable to postpone for future consideration all the great measures before the House on which difference of opinion existed, and to proceed with those only which seemed at once important and open to little discussion. Of these the only one which requires mention was an Act for ameliorating the criminal law. In 1833 a Royal Commission had been issued to inquire into the expediency of reducing the criminal law into one digest; and in 1836 the same commissioners had made a second report on the subject of the employment of counsel by prisoners, and on the punishment of death. Their recommendations had produced in the preceding session a Bill allowing

Opportune
death of the
King.

Accession of
Victoria.
June 20, 1837.

Work of the
Session
completed.

counsel to prisoners, and now formed the basis of a second Bill abolishing capital punishment, except for the following offences—high treason, murder, attempt to murder, rape, arson, piracy, burglary, and robbery, if attended by circumstances tending to endanger life. The feeling of the country was so decidedly in favour of this change that the Bill passed without any serious opposition. Having completed its necessary work the Parliament was dissolved, and the fate of the Ministry placed in the hands of the constituencies. Fortified with the favour of the Queen—of which they made, perhaps, too ostentatious a show—the Ministers were successful in securing a fair majority in the new Parliament. But the result of the elections gave no proof of the growth of Liberal feeling in the country. Such increase of strength as the Government acquired arose rather from the decrease of the Radical element in the new House than from any diminution in the number of their open opponents.

The new Parliament met on the 20th of November for a short autumn session. The Queen, in her opening speech, was made to speak with gratification of external peace and domestic tranquillity, and to point out as the main subjects for consideration the affairs of Spain and the condition of Canada and of Ireland, suggesting the reintroduction in some form or other of the three Irish Bills that had been dropped. English Church rates and the Bill against pluralities disappeared in the programme, making it evident that the ministers felt the necessity of keeping some terms at least with the Conservative opposition. The brief autumn session was occupied chiefly with the settlement of the Civil List. Lord Melbourne took a liberal view of the question; there was no parsimonious curtailment of the sum allowed to the Crown, and, after being referred to a Select Committee, the income of the Queen was fixed at £470,000, very much the same as the amount paid to the late king. The Parliament was then adjourned till the following February.

The meeting of Parliament after this adjournment was, however, hastened by the state of affairs in Canada. It re-assembled on the 16th of January, and its attention was at once occupied with Colonial affairs, which from time to time, for several years, formed the battleground for party strife. The difficulty in Canada had been of long standing, but at this moment it had ripened into an armed rebellion. The colony was not originally an English settlement, but had been ceded with its people to England at the close of the great war in 1763, and the questions arising were somewhat

Dissolution
and Elections.

First Session of
Parliament.
Nov. 1837.

Settlement of
the Civil List.

The Canadian
difficulty.

analogous to those which have made Ireland a constant source of trouble. But although there had been much carelessness and maladministration, England could not in this case accuse itself of intentional repression or of disregarding the wishes of the people; for as early as 1774 (by the Quebec Act), on the representation of the French inhabitants, the old Canadian law, known as the Custom of Paris, was re-established in all civil cases, and the free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion guaranteed. But Canada had not been conquered for the benefit of the French colonists alone; its chief value lay in the outlet it afforded to the superabundant population and energy of England. It was not possible that the uneducated, sedentary, and contented inhabitants of French origin should amalgamate well with the eager and enterprising English emigrant. Their characters were absolutely opposed, and the education which they had received through their system of law and government exaggerated the difference. Division of property in the place of primogeniture, the despotic rule of the French Governor-General and Intendant, and of a Church chiefly in the hands of the Jesuits, had created among the French population a character which formed the sharpest contrast, not only to that of the Englishman accustomed to see self-government at home, and to look for a still further development of it in his colonial settlement, but also wholly inconsistent with the development of a country where vast tracts of uncultivated land seemed to call for unlimited individual energy. Consequently the stream of immigration had swept beyond the French settlements, and spread itself over the unoccupied country more to the westward.

Under these circumstances, and with the best intentions, Mr. Pitt's remedy. Pitt had introduced, in 1791, the Quebec Government Bill.

It proposed to separate the English from the French settlers, and to establish two provinces, known as Upper and Lower Canada. The error of the proceeding was strongly pointed out by Fox. With a far truer insight than his rival into the real object to be aimed at, he urged that "the most desirable circumstance was that the French and English inhabitants of Canada should unite and coalesce as it were into one body, and that the different distinctions of the people should be extinguished for ever." His representations were in vain, the division was carried out; the races were thrown into inevitable antagonism, rendered the more marked by the unfortunate geographical position of the Upper Province, cut off from access to the sea by the unimproving community which occupied the Lower St. Lawrence. But the Bill went

even further. With that curious belief in the universal applicability of their own constitution which characterises English statesmen, Pitt, in his Bill, proceeded to erect in each Province what he considered a close imitation of the constitution of England. Again, no doubt, the intention was excellent. Yet, looking at the conditions of the case, the project was little short of ridiculous. In Lower Canada the House of Assembly, which was to represent the House of Commons, became filled with men who made politics their business, and who, instead of representing, created the opinions of their constituents. For the French Canadians, unused to self-government, fell an easy prey to such among them (for the most part lawyers) as possessed any education, and were unable or unwilling to exercise that control over their representatives which is necessary for the true working of a constitution like that of England. Nor could the Legislative Council, which was to represent the House of Lords, have anything but a forced and unwholesome existence. Whatever may be said of the advantages of an aristocracy, it cannot appear to be an act of political wisdom suddenly to create one when the natural materials do not exist. There was nothing at all in Lower Canada to represent an aristocracy. The French habit of division of property precluded the possibility of large landowners. An aristocracy of wealth had not yet been formed, and any superiority in that respect which had arisen was in the hands of the few English in the colony. The Legislative Council consisted therefore, in fact, almost entirely of English placemen, whose interests were in direct opposition to those of the French leaders of the Assembly. The Governor was to represent the Crown, and his Executive Council might be regarded as the counterpart of the Privy Council, or the Ministry. But the very nature of his position as an agent of the Imperial Government prevented him from exercising any of the real powers of the Crown, while the necessity of maintaining the predominance of English rule seemed to preclude the idea of making the Ministry responsible to the Assembly in the way in which an English Ministry is responsible to the Parliament. No scheme could well have been devised more certain to bring into prominence the rivalry of race, or better adapted, by the shadowy forms of liberty with which it deluded the colony, to afford opportunities for the exhibition of that rivalry under the form of constitutional dispute. In the Upper Colony the absence of the rivalry of race mitigated the evils. There it was the difference of constitutional view, bad administration, the heaping of place and influence upon a small class, and the endowment of that class with the

Grievances of
the Colonists.

political privileges of a constitutional aristocracy, which chiefly produced discord.

In Lower Canada there could be no doubt that (although the division of races lay at the bottom of the difficulty) there was also abundant ground for constitutional complaint. The grievances of the colonists were gradually formulated into a certain number of distinct demands. The complete command of the appropriation of the taxes, certain portions of which had hitherto been applied, without the cognisance of the Assembly, to the maintenance of the public service; the change of the Legislative Council from a nominated to an elected body; and the responsibility of the Executive, with the exception of the Governor, to the Provincial Parliament. Such were the chief objects of the Canadian malcontents. To these were added complaints as to the action of a great land company which had been established under the sanction of the Imperial Parliament, and whose interests it was believed were exclusively English. The important events which were taking place in England, the predominant interest excited by the Reform Bill, and the changes which followed it, had prevented proper attention being given to the Canadian question, and it is probable that Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Minister, was of too dilatory a character to handle such a crisis successfully. In 1831 a slight concession had been made to the colonists, but it by no means satisfied them. They still continued to press for the whole of their programme, and either to refuse Bills of Supply, or to draw them in such a way and with such conditions that the Governor thought fit to reject them. In 1835 a change of Governors was determined on. Major Head

New Governors sent out. Gosford and Head. 1835. (subsequently Sir Francis) was appointed to the Upper Province; Lord Gosford, who was at the same time placed at the head of a new Commission of Inquiry, to the Lower. Lord Gosford's views were undoubtedly conciliatory, but he took with him instructions which compelled him practically to refuse the colonial demands. Head, a man of eccentric character, immediately on his arrival divulged these instructions, which were intended to be kept secret; the consequence was the rejection of all conciliation, and a renewed declaration on the part of the Assembly that supplies should not be granted unless the fundamental changes which they required in the Constitution should be carried out. The consequent deadlock, and the threatening attitude of the colonists (who had found a formidable leader in Monsieur Papineau, a well-educated and intelligent man, Speaker of the House of Assembly), obliged the Ministry, on the receipt, in March 1837, of the report of

the Commission of Inquiry, to take some decided action. On the 17th of that month Lord John Russell produced a series of resolutions on which a Bill was to be based. The tone of his speech was conciliatory, and the existence of extensive evils was allowed. But the colonial policy of England was not yet sufficiently advanced to allow a Minister of the Crown to support an arrangement so closely resembling complete autonomy as that suggested by the colonists. The resolutions therefore reaffirmed the impossibility of allowing the Executive to be responsible to the Colonial Legislature, or the Legislative Council to be merely elective; and proceeded further to authorise the Governor, regardless of constitutional forms, to pay from the public money in his hands the arrears due to the judicial and executive officers. In fact, while allowing that the colonists were partially in the right, the resolutions refused them those safeguards which they required, and amounted to a distinct rejection of their demands.

The promulgation of these resolutions, and the Bill which accompanied them, brought matters to a crisis. The Assembly suspended its deliberations till it could judge of the effect of the reforms announced. The Governor, on the other hand, declared that the Assembly, by thus throwing up its functions, had virtually abrogated the Constitution. The question had drifted beyond the range of Parliamentary action; both parties, openly and secretly, prepared to decide it by force of arms. Some of the factious leaders were apprehended. The attempt to carry out the apprehension of others, especially of Papineau, brought about an actual collision. As a military effort the insurrection was insignificant. South of the St. Lawrence it was speedily suppressed by the victory of the royal troops at St. Charles; and in the north, by the victories of St. Eustace and St. Benoit, Sir John Colborne, the commander-in-chief, completed the defeat of the insurgents. Nor were their efforts in the Upper Province more successful. There Mr. M'Kenzie was the most prominent leader; but the failure of his attack upon Toronto, and his defeat at Montgomery's Tavern, proved the hopelessness of his cause. The conditions, indeed, of the Upper Province were such that the danger there from armed insurrection was but slight. The hostility of races was wanting, and the influence of the loyal or conservative party was strong; and Major Head, though at first inclined to rule in a conciliatory manner, had speedily made common cause with the small and compact party who virtually monopolised the government. But there existed at the time a well-

Russell's
Canada Bill.
March 1837.

Open rebellion.
Nov. 1837.

grounded fear that the citizens, if not the government of the United States, would make use of the troubles of their neighbours to attack Canada. Party hostility between the Southern or slave-holding States of the Union and the Northern abolitionists ran very high. The late annexation of Texas threatened to increase the power of the South; it was by no means improbable that the Northerners would seek compensation by a corresponding annexation of the English Provinces. Making full use of this fear, Head was enabled to dissolve the hostile Assembly, and to collect a new one thoroughly in harmony with the Government. He could even venture upon a strange course of action, which, had it not been successful, must have been regarded as highly reprehensible. Laying down as an axiom that in civil wars the preponderance must be moral and not physical, he stripped his province of troops, sending them to the aid of the Government in Lower Canada, and allowing (apparently without any attempt at preventing it) the insurrection to come to a head, awaited it, as he said, with folded arms. The experiment proved a successful one; the loyalists rallied in large numbers round the Government, and it was by the native forces alone that Toronto was saved, and the battle of Montgomery's Tavern won. Successful though he had been, the wisdom—even the rightfulness—of his policy was open to question. It might well be asked whether he had not, by a show of inactivity, really produced the rebellion. Such appears to have been the view of the English Ministry, for he was at once recalled. Before leaving the country he received addresses from the Legislature, expressing its confidence in him. As these Canadian difficulties form a starting-point in our colonial history, it is worth pointing out that we may gather from the wording of these addresses that the idea of a federation of all the States of British America, and even the representation of the colonists in the Imperial Parliament, was already in existence.

The insurrection, foiled in Canada itself, assumed a different, perhaps more dangerous character. It seemed likely that the fears of Sir Francis Head would be realised. The banks of the St. Lawrence and the lakes swarmed with American sympathisers. The American Government appeared but lukewarm in its efforts to repress them. Supplies and artillery were almost openly taken from the State arsenals, and a frontier war, in which the majority of the assailants were American citizens, was carried on. An incident in this irregular contest threatened even to embroil England with the United States. Navy Island, in the Niagara River, was occupied by the Americans, who drew their supplies

Danger of war
with America.

from the mainland, using for the purpose a steamer called the *Caroline*. The English commander seized this vessel, set fire to her, and sent her in flames over the Niagara Falls. She was an American ship, and had been seized in American territory. Fortunately her character was too evident, the breaches of international law in which she had been engaged too flagrant to be justified, and the American Government thought it prudent to raise no formal complaint.

When the news of the Canadian insurrection was laid before the hastily summoned Parliament in January 1838, Lord John Russell proposed to meet the difficulty by a measure almost unprecedented, but which, in its principles, seemed to commend itself to all parties. The Constitution of Canada was to be suspended, and a person of first-rate importance, endowed with almost unlimited powers—with the double title of Governor-in-Chief and High Commissioner—was to be despatched to rule during the constitutional interregnum, and to devise a permanent and satisfactory Constitution for the Provinces. There were, undoubtedly, errors in the form of the Bill, and inevitable complications arising from the conflicting powers of the Imperial and Provincial Legislatures. Bent, as usual, rather on party victory than on national advantage, the Opposition made the most of these weaknesses. Peel triumphantly obliged Lord John Russell entirely to withdraw his preamble, and amendments were introduced which virtually deprived the new Governor of that unlimited authority which was probably necessary for the success of the plan. Though vested with the power of doing any act which the Legislature of Lower Canada could constitutionally do, he was restricted from repealing or altering any Act of the Imperial Parliament, or any Act of the Provincial Parliament which had in any way modified an Act of the Imperial Parliament. It was certainly not understood at the time how far-reaching that restriction was.

Russell's pro-
posal.
Jan. 1838.

The Commissioner selected was Lord Durham, a man of great abilities and advanced Liberal views, but of an impulsive and self-asserting character. He took with him two men well fitted to assist him, Mr. Charles Buller and Mr. Wakefield. He ought, no doubt, to have understood from the tone of Parliament before he started, that the greatest care would be requisite in exercising his powers, and that those powers themselves were a good deal limited. He appears, on the other hand, to have believed that he was sent out as dictator, charged with the duty and responsibility of settling the great questions at issue single-handed. Immediately

Durham sent
out.
May 1838.

on his arrival the treatment of the political prisoners presented itself as a difficulty. To try them by the ordinary forms of law would have been but to court failure. To bring them to justice in any way must have entailed a severity of punishment certain to thwart the success of the fair and conciliatory measures with which he held himself charged. He therefore found means to persuade the prisoners to confess their guilt, or rather to acknowledge their participation in the late rebellion. With the aid of his Special Council (which, in accordance with the provisions of the Bill, was able to perform any act for which the old Legislative Assembly had been competent), he issued an ordinance banishing from the country those prisoners who were in his power, and ordering their transportation to the Bermudas. A list of insurgent leaders who had escaped to America was added to those whom he thus deported, and the whole were forbidden to return to the Canadas, under pain of death, till leave should be given them to do so. Lord Durham believed that in this way he had cleared the ground for the work he had to do. Without failure of justice, without the exercise of vengeance, without attaching to a political crime the stigma of criminal punishment (for the Bermudas was not a criminal settlement), he had rid himself, for the time being, of those whose influence would have interfered with the settlement of the country. Unfortunately he had gone beyond his powers. It was clear, at all events—and he himself subsequently allowed it—that he had no power to insist upon the retention of his prisoners in the Bermudas, which lay entirely beyond his jurisdiction. It was also open to great question whether the creation of a new crime punishable by death did not entirely contravene the clause which had forbidden him to tamper with the Acts of the Imperial Parliament. It was certain, at least, that a powerful Opposition—bent on employing every means of assaulting and hampering the Ministry, would fasten on such points, and, supporting them with the cry against despotism and unconstitutional government, which is always listened to in England—would use them as a terrible weapon. The Government, with a small majority in one House only, and that majority consisting of discordant elements, and in a permanent minority in the other House, was too weak to resist the assaults made upon it, and was compelled to disallow the ordinance. A fresh proof was afforded of the extreme difficulty, nay, impossibility, of employing with success the ability and energy of a single man, however well adapted for the purpose, in a country where the executive is paralysed by party interests and the ties of constitutional prejudice. Thus

The Opposition
demand his
recall.

Aug. 1838.

crossed at the very threshold of his reforms, Lord Durham, who was wholly deficient in that patience which enables a man to sink himself in his cause, and pursue his object regardless of temporary repulse, at once threw up his office. In this he did but anticipate his recall, which crossed his resignation on its way to England. His retirement was not dignified. He thought it necessary in intimating it to the Canadians to accompany it with a long proclamation, which was in fact an attack upon the home Government, and an appeal to the people against its authority. The feeling which it excited in England was such that the *Times* newspaper allowed itself to speak of him as "the Lord High Seditious." But the interval between his arrival and his resignation, short though it was, had been by no means wasted. He had made a progress through the country, which, though perhaps too ostentatious, seems to have afforded him an opportunity of learning much. With the aid of Mr. Charles Buller, and some assistance from Mr. Wakefield, he prepared a report on the condition and prospects of Canada, the value of which it is difficult to overstate. On his return he was greeted by the extreme Liberal party with great enthusiasm, but before long found that the general feeling was disapproval of what he had done; and although he resumed his place in Parliament, he had practically ruined his career, and two years afterwards he died, still in the prime of life. Before he had been many weeks in England, and while he was still congratulating himself at meetings which were held in his favour on his perfect success in restoring peace in the Colonies, news of a fresh insurrection arrived. Sir John Colborne, on whom the care of the Colonies had devolved, and who subsequently succeeded to the vacant governorship, proved himself capable of meeting the difficulty, although complicated with an invasion from America; and in his hands, armed as he was with extraordinary powers, the colony awaited the restitution of its Constitution.

Second out-
break sup-
pressed by
Colborne.
Nov. 1838.

The Government at first appeared inclined to proceed at once to legislation based upon the recommendations of Lord Durham's report. But the personal interests connected with the question, the weakness of the Government, and its apparent dread of encountering opposition, induced it to withdraw the Bill and to postpone the settlement till 1842. But the extraordinary powers vested in the Governor, without which no government could be carried on, lapsed in 1840; it became necessary, therefore, in that year to take some definite step. In the interval the principles of the Bill had been discussed in Canada itself, and although they had encountered some opposition, there seemed

upon the whole to be sufficient willingness on the part of the colony to leave the question in the hands of the Imperial Government to render legislation possible. A new Bill was therefore introduced early in the session, and passed without any material opposition or amendment. It was based entirely upon the recommendations of Lord Durham. That statesman had been clear-sighted enough to observe that it was not the form or principles of the Constitution which were the real grievance of the colonists, but that the mischief lay in the hostility of race, in the perversion of the principles of the Constitution, and in mal-administration, and further, in the extreme ignorance existing among the French population. He therefore advised that a national, as contrasted with a local, feeling should be fostered by the union of the two Provinces; that the principles of self-government should be supported by placing in the hands of the Colonial Parliament everything except a few points of Imperial interest; that, a Civil List being secured for the maintenance of officials, all other financial questions should be left to the Assembly; that the Legislative Council, though still consisting of nominees, should be rendered more representative by the increase of its numbers; and that the Executive, with the exception of the Governor, should be responsible to the local Parliament. At the same time, for the purpose of increasing political life, he recommended the introduction of a good form of municipal government. The Bill, which was passed in July, incorporated these reforms, with the exception of the responsibility of ministers—which, however, from this time onwards was in practice always admitted. There was thus created a Government as nearly as possible independent, with the effect that the Canadians at once turned their attention to their own improvement, and agitation practically ceased. Durham's report, in fact, laid down the lines which have been consistently followed in the government of our Colonies, and set on foot a system to which we probably owe the maintenance of our connection with them. The restoration of the Constitution was carried out with complete success by Mr. Poulett Thomson, who had been made Governor of Canada in August 1839.

Next to the violent outbreak in Canada, which could brook no delay, the state of Ireland seemed to call for the first attention of Parliament. The part played by Irish politics in later English history has been a just retribution for the centuries of neglect and misrule to which that country had been subjected. It has been a constant weapon in the hands of

Canada Bill
based on
Durham's
report.
July 1840.

Ireland the
victim of
Party
Government.

the Opposition, a constant and apparently incurable sore in every Administration. That it is the victim of Party Government is of itself sufficient to explain the evils from which Ireland suffers. It matters not whether the Government is inclined to leniency or to coercion, the Opposition has at once adopted the opposite line of politics; every measure has been thwarted and weakened, or delayed until its virtue has gone out of it. A country conquered, and practically occupied by a foreign and dominant race, torn asunder by the most violent differences of religion, with a population whose character and habits its conqueror could scarcely understand, and which maintained characteristics of an earlier and more barbarous civilisation, presented difficulties which it would have required the united liberal and patriotic efforts of all parties to bring to a settlement. Instead of meeting with any such large and generous treatment, the interests of the country have been again and again selfishly subordinated to party success; and every recognition of its reasonable demands has assumed the form of a concession wrung from the Government of the day under the influence of party pressure. Even Fox, whose wide liberality saw what was the necessity of the case, spoilt his noble advocacy of a proper treatment of the country by speaking of it under the odious word *concession*. "Concession," he said, "and again concession." It appears not to have occurred, even to his large mind, that it was not concession which was wanted, but a wise and just Government. It is this miserable view, fostering, as it inevitably does, the idea that everything was to be gained by outrage and clamour, which has prevented any happy settlement of Irish questions. Of the statesmen of importance in 1837 Lord Durham alone appears to have had a true view of the policy which should have been pursued in Ireland. He alone seems to have seen, as he saw in Canada, that the amalgamation of races, by allowing to the Irish a perfect equality with their more powerful neighbour, was the right course to pursue. With all others the object appeared to be the minimum of concession which would secure tranquillity. That there were evils to be cured no one denied; but while the Liberal party would have met them with very considerable measures of reform, the Conservatives were still determined to govern with as high a hand as was at all consistent with peace. The Ministers were more especially pledged to a liberal course by the support which O'Connell and his Irish friends was affording them in Parliament. It had been with their assistance that the Conservative Government in 1834 had been driven to resign; in the present close balance of parties it was their support which alone

secured the Ministerial majority. Full of personal dislike for O'Connell, the Conservatives had found in this alliance their readiest weapon for assaulting the Ministry. The conciliatory government of Lord Mulgrave was spoken of as a mere truckling to the Irish liberator; the ministers were constantly charged with supporting, on party grounds, the great Association which he had formed, because they believed that its influence would, on the whole, be used to uphold their policy. The Irish Tories and Orangemen filled the ears of the public with their complaints of Government partiality.

Concession to Ireland had become a necessary item in the party programme of the Liberals; and three great measures—the Irish Poor Law Act; the Irish Tithe Act, directed to the alleviation of the permanent condition of disorder which attended the collection of tithes; and the Irish Municipal Act, for the purpose of allowing to the Irish many of the advantages of self-government which the English Municipal Act had already secured to their fellow-subjects—were directed severally against the crying evils which formed the chief complaints of Irish patriots, the devouring plague of poverty and mendicancy, the anomalous supremacy of a State Church of the minority, and the sole predominance of the English and Protestant party in local government. Again and again, though with much opposition, these Bills had been got through the Lower House only to be rejected by the sturdy Conservatives in the Lords. But Peel and his friends saw clearly enough that the Government was becoming discredited, and that before long it was inevitable that they would be recalled to power. That the much-disputed Irish measures should be settled before that day arrived would be an obvious advantage to them. Their theory of Conservatism allowed of the acceptance of what had been done, while they would have avoided the responsibility of doing it themselves. On the other hand, the Government were naturally disinclined to allow their legislation to be absolutely thwarted, and were eager, in some way at least, to redeem their pledge to Ireland. Under these circumstances thoughts of compromise began to arise.

Of these three measures, the introduction of some Poor Law offered the least ground for party fight, and was therefore the first to be produced; for there was a pretty general consensus that something must be done, and that the permanent burden of relief should be thrown upon the owners of real property. There was, indeed, the greatest necessity for some such measure. A Commission had reported in 1836, disclosing a terrible

Desire of both Parties to settle Irish questions.

Revision of the Irish Poor Law.

condition of poverty. The average wages of the agricultural labourers were estimated at under 2s. 6d. a week, as contrasted with 9s. or 10s. which were the average wages in England. This was the natural result of the state of the population. The agricultural labourers in Ireland were in the ratio of one to every fourteen cultivated acres—in England, of one to thirty-four. Nor was the produce of these acres the same; while in England it was estimated that an acre returned about £4, 10s., in Ireland, the average produce was only £2, 10s. The insufficient wage was eked out by small holdings; nearly one-third of the people depended only upon little plots around their cabins. For many weeks in every year these cottiers could not draw from their land even a sufficiency of potatoes. They crowded over to England in the summer months, and undersold English labour in all directions. Mendicancy was universal, and not considered in the smallest degree disgraceful. The Commissioners by whom this report was issued, including among their numbers Archbishop Whately and Archbishop Murray, the heads of the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches of Ireland, were men on whom every reliance could be placed. Their recommendations, however, seemed wholly inadequate. The amount of destitution was so great, the income of Ireland comparatively so small, that it appeared impossible to the Commissioners to lay so vast a burden upon it as the complete support of the poor. They wished, therefore, to confine parochial relief to the aged and infirm, and to those physically incapacitated from work. The Government, on the other hand, believed that the principle of the English Poor Law might be fully introduced into Ireland. In its amended form, though it had excited considerable discontent, it had on the whole worked well in England. Mr. Nicholls, one of the English Poor Law Commissioners, was sent over to report. In a six weeks' journey (the brevity of which was frequently alleged against its efficiency), he came to very definite conclusions. He urged the division of Ireland into large unions, and the erection in each of a workhouse. He recommended that destitution should form the claim to relief, and that willingness to enter the workhouse should be the test of destitution. In fact, with the exception of parochial settlement, which the migratory habits of the Irish rendered inadvisable, he reported in favour of the strict application of the new English law, the working of which was to be placed in the hands of the English Commissioners.

He can scarcely have been correct in asserting that the feeling of the Irish was in favour of any Bill embodying this opinion;

vict.

Report of Mr. Nicholls. 1836.

B

such an assertion must be limited to the upper and middle classes. O'Connell was a truer representative of the real popular feeling.

Opposition of O'Connell. He opposed the scheme, both on economical and sentimental grounds. The expenditure on supporting the vast mass of destitution must seriously cripple capital, yet it was the want of capital which caused the destitution; the remedy made the evil worse. He even urged higher economic grounds, and spoke of the ruin of self-dependence and thrift caused by such a Bill; points no doubt of great weight and cogency, but somewhat inapplicable to a people with whom dependence and beggary were quite habitual. His sentimental arguments were those common to all opponents of organised relief; the closing of the gates of charity, the chilling effect which must be produced when the only answer to be given to the man who asked for help was "Go to the workhouse." The Government however persisted in bringing in their Bill upon the lines recommended by Mr. Nicholls, and, in spite of the high authority of the Commissioners of 1836, in spite of the combined opposition of all sections of the Irish members (for Mr. Shaw, the leader of the

Poor Law Bill
passed.
July 1838.

Orangemen, joined on this point with O'Connell), they succeeded in carrying the measure. Nor was it seriously opposed in the Upper House, and it became law. There

is some reason to question the wisdom of inflicting, in all its strictness, the English Poor Law upon a country such as Ireland, where the conditions of life were very different. The rejection of all outdoor relief must be based upon the supposition that work is, on the whole, to be found by every one who desires it. This, which was probably on the whole true of England, was notoriously untrue of Ireland. Again, by the theory of the Poor Law, the relief which an able-bodied man can claim must be so adjusted that it shall be less desirable than even the lowest form of self-earned maintenance. It was impossible in Ireland for the State to arrange a form of life lower than that led by the extreme poor. The only deterrent element in the Poor Law scheme was the incarceration of the recipient of relief—very irksome, no doubt, to a people so intolerant of restraint as the Irish, yet not to be hastily assumed as a sufficiently powerful motive to keep men from the workhouse. It seemed, in fact, almost impossible that the law should be successful, unless it went hand in hand, as was pointed out by Lord Devon, with other measures for the relief of the poor class, such as the establishment of large public works; the increase, by reclamation of waste lands, of the cultivable area of the country; and legislation which should restrain the tendency towards inordinate

rents, which were eating up whatever little capital the small farmers might possess.

It was not, perhaps, altogether a comfortable triumph to have forced the Poor Law upon an unwilling people. But the Government had, at all events, passed its measure without much serious opposition from its English opponents. ^{Party difficulties as to the other two Irish Bills.} It remained to be seen how the other two Bills, which in the course of the last five years had become the rallying-points of party fight, could be got through Parliament. Language had however been used by both the Duke of Wellington and Peel as early as the year 1837, which implied the desire of the Conservatives that the questions at issue should be brought to a settlement; and the Government, through Lord John Russell, put itself into communication with its opponents for the purpose of arriving at some compromise. It was found that a little mutual concession would render an arrangement possible. Each of the two Bills had in it a point round which the opposition had centred. With regard to the Municipal Bill the Conservatives had shown themselves ready to confess the evils of the existing system (in which municipal office and power were confined to a very small number of Protestant townsmen), and had expressed their willingness to assist in removing them; but they regarded the substitution of corporations freely elected by constituencies with a low franchise as undesirable and dangerous in the present state of Ireland. They preferred some form of nomination which would virtually have robbed the inhabitants of the advantages of self-government. In the Tithe Act it was the appropriation clause, and the resolutions passed in 1835 as to the use to be made of any surplus arising from a re-arrangement of Church property, which excited their anger. Even many moderate Liberals looked with some displeasure at the obstinacy of their leaders, which perpetuated the anarchy and disorder arising from the collection of the tithes, and thought the appropriation clause might well be dropped. Under these circumstances an understanding was arrived at that no opposition should be offered to the passage of some form of Tithe Bill, if the appropriation clause was not insisted upon, and that, in return for such a concession, corporations on the elective principle should be allowed.

It would seem that in consequence of this arrangement Lord John Russell had intended to proceed by way of resolution—that is to say, he intended to ask the assent of the House ^{The Tithe Bill.} to certain principles on which a Bill might then be formed, in the full expectation that it would meet with no resistance till the details

were discussed in Committee. But the Conservatives, carrying their cautious leader further probably than he cared to go, determined to have one more trial of strength. When, therefore, Lord John Russell had explained the principle of the forthcoming Bill, Sir Thomas Acland at once moved that the Resolution come to by the House in 1835 should be rescinded. This seemed to imply that in the Bill, as sketched by Lord John Russell, there was still some trace of the obnoxious appropriation clause, and of an intention to appropriate Church property to other than Church purposes. The motion was indeed lost; but the division disclosed an opposition of formidable strength, for while the majority numbered 307, there was a minority of 298. In the face of so close a division, Lord John Russell thought it prudent to yield, and to give a distinct promise that his Tithe Bill should be simply restricted to the conversion of the tithes into a rent-charge.

To understand exactly the effect of Sir Thomas Acland's motion, it is necessary to recollect that this question of tithes had long occupied Parliament, and that every successive Government had tried its hand at it in vain. It had been generally accepted that the best way of handling the tithes was to change them into a rent-charge—that is to say, the landowners were to pay the tithes instead of the tenants. For the trouble thus laid upon them, they were to be remunerated by a deduction, varying in different Bills, of from 40 to 25 per cent., while the Church was to be compensated for the diminution of its receipts by the certainty of their payment. But the Whigs, at the close of the short administration of Sir Robert Peel (April 1835), had driven him from office by insisting upon an addition to this simple measure. A Resolution had been passed that "no measure upon the subject of tithes in Ireland could lead to a satisfactory and final adjustment which did not embody the principle that any surplus remaining after providing for the Established Church should be applied locally to the general education of all classes of Christians." It was this Resolution which had frustrated the efforts of Morpeth to settle the question in July 1835. He too proposed a rent-charge in lieu of tithes, and in this all parties were agreed. But with the Resolution freshly carried, it was impossible not to act in accordance with it; and he was compelled to introduce as part of his measure some provisions for re-arranging the revenues of the Church. There was indeed abundant room for reform; in 199 parishes there was no single churchman, in 860 there were less than fifty. But the effort of

Previous efforts
to settle the
tithe question.

Morpeth to get rid of this glaring anomaly, to suppress useless parishes, and to adjust on some fair principle the payments of those which remained, proved destructive to his measure. A surplus of some £60,000 would have been left, and the Lords, refusing to allow sacrilegious hands to touch in any way Church property, threw out the Bill. It was indeed impossible to arrive at any amicable arrangement so long as this Resolution was in force. Peel had probably intended to allow it to be silently disregarded. His more eager partisans, with Sir Thomas Acland at their head, determined to emphasise the Conservative victory, and to insist upon its repeal; and though their motion failed, Lord John Russell, as has been seen, was compelled to surrender it. The Bill, which was brought in in May and carried in August 1838, was nearly identical with the Conservative Bill of 1835. It fixed the rent-charge at the rate of £75 (that is, a reduction of 25 per cent.), and surrendered as a free gift the whole of the million which had been lent to the clergy by Government. The impotence of the Ministry could scarcely have received a more striking proof. It was plain that the Conservatives were in fact governing England.

To make the humiliation of the Whigs even more evident, it was only necessary that they should lose the reward of the compromise and submission they had made. They were to have been repaid by the quiet passage of their Municipal Corporation Bill. It was accordingly produced. By this Bill certain towns were to be given corporations elective in character, and certain smaller towns might if they pleased be incorporated, if a majority of the electors desired it. Thus far the proposition was accepted. But on the franchise of the elector a quarrel arose. While the Conservatives demanded that it should be fixed at £10 a year clear rental, the Ministerial Party, regarding this as too high—as higher in fact than the franchise in England—insisted upon a £5 franchise. As neither party would yield, the matter was brought to the vote, and in the Lower House the Government was victorious. But as usual victory in the Commons was of but little avail; the Lords amended the franchise clause in accordance with the Conservative wishes. The Bill thus amended was brought back to the Lower House, but, as all compromise proved impossible, the amendment was refused and the Bill dropped. In the following year another attempt was made, but with exactly the same result. Again, early in 1840, Lord Morpeth introduced the Bill, proposing a franchise of £10 for the larger towns and £8

The Tithe Bill
carried.
Aug. 1838.

Failure of the
Corpora-
tion Bill.
May 1838.

Corporation
Bill passed.
March 1840.

for the smaller. The Lords as before rejected the lower franchise, and the Government, hopeless of success, accepted their defeat and allowed the mutilated measure to pass. The Irish measures of the Government had thus resulted in an unpopular Poor Law of questionable efficacy, and in an arrangement of the tithes and a Municipal Corporation Bill dictated to them by the Opposition.

As the great power of the Conservative Opposition had rendered the legislation of the Whig ministers with regard to Ireland somewhat stunted and abortive, it is by their administration of the country that they must be judged. Ireland was, during their ministry—as it had been almost uninterruptedly since the Act of Union—a scene of much confusion, and the same question which every party has had to ask itself had been placed before the Ministry of Lord Melbourne,—was tranquillity to be obtained without the employment of extraordinary coercive measures? Lord John Russell had asserted that concession was the necessary key to the difficulty. The history of Lord Grey's administration, and the final withdrawal of Lord Stanley and his associates from the Liberal ranks, had pledged Lord Melbourne (the representative of the more Liberal party of that administration) to pursue the policy of conciliation. The government of Ireland had been intrusted to Lord Normanby and Lord Morpeth as Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary. They had carried out to the full the policy indicated. Normanby's arrival in Ireland had given occasion to a demonstration of popular approval on the part of the followers of O'Connell; and this somewhat clap-trap commencement had been followed up in 1836 by a Viceregal progress, in the course of which a considerable number of men who were in prison for offences of a political or agrarian kind had been liberated by the exercise of the royal prerogative of pardon. The Viceroy had moreover consistently attempted to make use only of the ordinary legal weapons at his disposal, and had avoided the employment of extraordinary powers or the demand for any increase of coercive jurisdiction.

The Permanent Under Secretary for Ireland was a man of the name of Drummond, who had been an Engineer officer. His views, which as permanent official he had every opportunity of enforcing upon the Viceroy and Secretary, were much more comprehensive than at that time was usual. He saw—what all subsequent history has tended to prove—that the sores of Ireland were social rather than political. A false system of 300 years' standing could not be cured by any single act of legislation.

Normanby's
Irish Ad-
ministration.

Opposition of
the Tory Irish
to Drummond's
views.

The gradual removal of such evils as the excessive enforcement of the landlord's rights; as the want of employment incident to deficient capital, to small and one-sided outlets for industry, and to overgrown population, were of more importance than the equalisation of political rights. Political demands must receive due attention; obvious political wrongs and inequalities, forming centres around which discontent might easily gather, must be removed; but it was useless to expect any real tranquillity till time and gradual amelioration had softened the deeply-seated social antagonism which lay at the bottom of Irish discontent. Such views as these, coupled as they were with the open support given to the Ministry by O'Connell, excited a most hostile feeling in the minds of the Tory landowners and of the old Protestant and Orange connection, which had not forgotten the time of its exclusive predominance. There was a constant and bitter expression among them, both in Parliament and outside, of their belief that the Government was fomenting disorder, supporting O'Connell's Associations, and exciting at once by its weakness of repression and by its flattering words the excesses which it was its chief business to control. As a matter of course there were grounds on which such charges could be based. It was true that the Government had not attacked the General Association, which was a sort of counterpart of the old Catholic Association; nay, more, it had appointed a member of that Association to the office of legal adviser to the Government. In its efforts to be just between the various religions it had ordered that no jurymen should be set aside on account of his religious creed, thus endangering, it was urged, the chance of honest conviction. Nor could it be questioned that the amount of crime was still very terrible. The anger of the Irish Tories reached a climax when, at the beginning of the year 1839, Lord Norbury, an inoffensive and respected nobleman, was shot in his own grounds—a murder for which no adequate cause could be discovered, and the perpetrators of which escaped detection. A meeting of magistrates assembled a few days after it at Tullymore to consider what was to be done. As was to be expected, the opportunity was taken to give vent to all the charges against the Government in their full bitterness. The existence of a far-spread conspiracy for the abolition of rent, rendered more terrible by the determination of every peasant to shelter the offender, was brought out and emphasised, and it was distinctly asserted by Lord Oxmantown that this organisation had derived its chief power from the events of 1835, and the belief that the Government had formed a compact with the agitators in Ireland. An expression, used by Secretary

Drummond in his answer some time previous to an angry petition from the Magistrates of Tipperary, to the effect that "property had its duties as well as its rights" was declared to be a mere insult, and to have had the effect of increasing the animosity felt against the owners of the soil, while it emboldened the disturbers of the public peace. In the opinion of the meeting it was hopeless to appeal to the Irish Executive, they must call upon the people of England, the legislature and the throne, for protection.

The spokesmen of the Irish Tories in both Houses at once proceeded to act on this suggestion. In the Lower House Mr. Shaw moved for the production of papers between the years 1835 and 1839, in order to prove from the statistics of committals and convictions the constant increase of anarchy during the present Viceroy's tenure of office. Agrarian outrages, he declared, in the last six months of 1836 had been 843, in the next six months 904, and in the third period had risen to 1086. Of eight new Protestant tenants upon the land of Lord Lorton, who had been carrying on the system of eviction for the purpose as it was stated of introducing men of more capital and intelligence, two had had their cattle killed, two had been assaulted and left for dead, and the four others had been actually murdered; while the landowners were struggling to make good their position against these overwhelming difficulties, the Under Secretary had taken the opportunity of insulting them by calling their attention to their duties; and, in the presence of the secret Ribbon Society, Government had chosen for its legal adviser a member of the great Association in Dublin now known by the name of the Precursors. It was plain that this was a covert attack upon the Viceroy and Secretary. Lord Morpeth, after proving the error of the statistics produced, and taking credit rather than shame to himself for the increased number of committals, which only showed the vigilance of the police, turned the tables upon his accusers, and upheld the incriminated words of Mr. Drummond by a terrible list of evictions. In seven counties in the course of six years there had been upwards of 1800 ejectments, each ejectment on an average involving four families. If this was true it would mean that no less than 36,000 people had been turned out of their homes in six years. Such proceedings justified Mr. Drummond's words, and as long as they continued they would certainly generate resistance. The assault, thus met, produced no result. Taking the sting out of the motion by extending its action beyond the period of Lord Normanby's administration, Morpeth allowed the production of the

*Irish Debates
in Parliament.
March 1839.*

papers demanded, which could after all only prove the existence of what was already known—the terrible amount of agrarian crime. In the Upper House Lord Roden headed the attack, and gave it a more definite form by moving for a Select Committee to inquire into the state of Ireland since 1835. The personal character of the motion was rendered more pronounced by the distinct assertion that the evils had been either created by the Lord Lieutenant or aggravated by his unscrupulous encouragement of agitation for his own purposes. Upon this Lord Normanby entered into a full defence of his administration; insisted that there was a real diminution of crime; pointed out that in every case of murder, except Lord Norbury's, the criminals had been committed and were now awaiting trial; brushed away all the exaggerations which had surrounded the large exercise of the royal prerogative of pardon in 1836; and as to the charge of laxity in the administration of the law, pointed out that he had established local solicitors as public prosecutors throughout Ireland, and had brought the very scattered and inefficient police he had found there into the great organisation of the Irish Constabulary. His defence did not, however, convince the hostile House, and Lord Roden's motion was carried against the Government by a majority of five.

As their management of Ireland had formed perhaps the most important part of the policy of the Ministers, as it was there alone that they had really maintained to the full the liberality of their principles, they thought it impossible to allow this hostile division to pass without further notice, and Lord John Russell at once declared his intention of bringing in a resolution, which was in fact a vote of confidence in the Ministry. It declared that it was the determination of the House to persevere in those principles which had guided the Executive Government of Ireland for the last eight years. Apart from the necessity of assuring its position against the hostile House of Lords, as a mere party move the introduction of some such resolution was desirable. It was certain to rally round the Government not only their own immediate supporters but the Radicals and the Irish. It moreover put the Conservative leader in a very difficult position. His views on the Government of Ireland were either less wise than might have been expected from him, or he was blinded by the requirements of party. It has been seen how he had systematically weakened the legislation introduced by the Ministry; how in the name of the Protestant Church he had for years prevented the settlement of the

*Government
successful in
the Commons,
defeated in
the Lords.*

*Russell's Vote
of Confidence
places Peel in
a dilemma.*

tithe difficulty and successfully opposed the Municipal Corporation Act. He had done a worse injury to Ireland by thwarting a wide plan for the establishment of railway communication. Drummond, whose favourite scheme this was, believed that some Government money would be well employed in opening up the resources of Ireland and encouraging the investment of capital in industrial undertakings, and that at the same time such great public works would afford occupation to the redundant population. It was intended that the Government should both advance money and give a guarantee for a certain rate of profit—that it should, in fact, act as the Indian Government has successfully acted. But Peel, who saw no objection to keeping up the differences of the two kingdoms in such matters as local government, was unable to see that the difference of the condition of England and Ireland might allow some relaxation of the laws of political economy. He at once advanced the well-known arguments in favour of *laissez-faire*. Railways would come where railways would pay; a country had no right to pledge its credit to support a concern which must avowedly begin in a loss. His authority as a financier, and a fatal reverence for economic rules without regard to the conditions of their application, were sufficient to shelve the plan. Yet he was fully conscious that if called to the Government he would find it quite impossible to adopt an open policy of repression. He did not choose to pledge himself to any change in the principles of which Lord John's resolution was asking Parliament to approve. He could not therefore negative the resolution, but found it necessary to propose a long counter-resolution declaring that it was uncalled for, and sought to give an air of constitutional wisdom to it by emphasising the apparent attempt of the Ministry to produce a collision between the Houses. The rival parties met in their full force over these resolutions, and the Government was victorious by a majority of twenty-two, which may be regarded as the full strength of its superiority. It was enough to go on with, but showed plainly how easily the slight superiority might be forfeited.

Slight Govern-
ment majority.
April 16, 1839.

Such a loss of strength speedily occurred upon the occasion of a question of Colonial policy. In its management of Canada—however good its intentions may have been—the Government had certainly, either in itself or in its agents, undergone a good deal of discredit. The difficulties in Jamaica were destined to be fatal to it.

The question of slavery proved to have been but partially settled

in spite of the munificent gift with which England had compensated the slave-owners by the Emancipation Bill of 1833. The efforts for the repression of the trade had in some points merely aggravated its evils; the postponement of complete emancipation, and the introduction of a temporary system of apprenticeship had proved a failure. Lord Brougham, who brought the question before the House in January 1838, on presenting a petition for immediate emancipation, pointed out the terrible horrors of the slave-carrying trade which still existed. All the measures taken for putting an end to the trade had only resulted in a slight diminution of the number of slaves carried, and in a very great increase of their misery. Treaties had been entered into with most of the European Powers which enabled English cruisers to prevent the shipment of slaves, but in the case of Portugal it was not until the slaves were actually on board that the right of search or seizure accrued. Again, the prize-money for the capture of slavers was given in proportion to the number of slaves. In some cases therefore inevitably, in others probably for interested motives, it was usual to allow the slaves to be placed on board and to attempt to capture the ship when laden. As the success of the trader therefore depended on the speed of his ship, the slavers were built entirely for speed without regard to accommodation. As long as the trade had been a lawful one it had been regulated, and a certain amount of air and food apportioned to each slave; these arrangements had now disappeared, the slaves were packed as close as possible in narrow inconvenient vessels, and when pursued the living cargo was thrown overboard without compunction to lighten the ship. Under these conditions the trade was still profitable, and was still so largely pursued that in one year (1835), eighty ships, with a freight of 28,000 slaves, had entered the port of Havana. The effect of the modified emancipation, which had allowed forced apprenticeship to last till the year 1840, had been equally ineffectual in improving the condition of the blacks after they were landed. Even from selfish motives the slave-owner generally takes the same care of his human property as a farmer does of his cattle. But as apprentices the negroes had ceased to be the property of the planter. It was the interest of the master to wring from them as much as possible during their apprenticeship, while they were still within his grasp. With insufficient food, overworked, and subjected to the severest punishments, sometimes illegal, sometimes inflicted under the guise of law, the apprentice was worse off than the slave had been. Basing his

The Jamaica
difficulty.

The evils of
modified
emancipation.

arguments on such facts as these, Lord Brougham moved resolutions, the most important of which was one which recommended immediate emancipation. Great philanthropic movements are almost inevitably mingled with a certain amount of charlatanry, and the Government, carefully guarding itself and perhaps rightly against sentimental enthusiasms, opposed Lord Brougham's suggestions upon the ground that immediate abolition would be a breach of faith. England had entered, they urged, into a distinct contract with the planters, the essential point of which was the gradual and not immediate abolition of slavery. The stipulations of that contract had indeed been strained and broken by the planters, but it was inconsistent with the honour of the nation to go back from its bargain. The House of Lords on this occasion agreed with the ministerial view, and Lord Brougham's resolutions were lost. A great debate of the same character in the House of Commons terminated in the same manner. It was held that, whatever the consequences, the pledged word of Parliament could not be broken.

Yet it was thought necessary to introduce two Bills to restrict the unjust violence of the planters. It was upon these two Bills that the grave difficulties with the Jamaica colonists hung—difficulties which involved the resignation of Lord Melbourne's Government. One of these Acts, known as "the Act to amend the Abolition of Slavery Act," attempted to find some remedies for the evil of the apprenticeship system. The other was aimed at the abuses—fully recognised and of long standing—which had arisen in the management of the prisons in the West Indies. Domestic punishment and imprisonment had been made unlawful; the public prisons became therefore of great importance, and their unrestricted management by the planters and their agents had turned them in many cases into torture chambers. The Bill placed them directly in the hands of the Queen and Council—that is, of the Imperial Government. The evils of the apprenticeship system—the inevitable evils, arising from the existence of a class at once slaves and not slaves; the difficulty of exacting work—without the reward offered by wages, and with coercion of a restricted character—from men used to labour upon compulsion only; and the danger, nay, almost the certainty of the undue use of power by the master class smarting under the losses which emancipation entailed upon them had been obvious not only in Jamaica but in the other West India colonies. Less irritated by what had happened, and perhaps more wisely governed, several of

Brougham's
proposal for
immediate
emancipation
rejected.

Two Bills to
amend the
evils.

these colonies had thought it better to proceed to immediate and complete emancipation. Thus when Sir Lionel Smith, the Governor of Jamaica, promulgated the "Act of Amendment" (June 1st, 1838), he accompanied it with a strong recommendation to the Assembly to follow the same course, emphasising his advice by pointing out the great difficulty of supporting apprenticeship in the face of the action of the other colonies. Much against their will, and with extreme irritation against the Imperial Government, the Colonists thought it wise to yield to public opinion in England, and to listen to the advice thus pressed upon them. They agreed to immediate abolition. But while yielding they could not forbear to show the bitterness of their anger at being forced, as they chose to believe unconstitutionally, to give their consent. "In consequence of the Act recently passed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom," they said, "a Parliament wherein we are in no way represented, we have been constrained to abandon the remaining term of the apprenticeship."

Consequent
disaffection in
Jamaica.

While their masters were in this sulky temper, on the 1st of August the blacks became absolutely free. There had been dread of outbreak and outrage, and of a permanent disinclination on the part of the blacks to work for wages. According to the evidence of the Governor and the Bishop the fear was groundless. They declared "that the moment of freedom was one of orderly and solemn thankfulness, and that the churches and chapels were everywhere filled with these happy people, in humble gratitude for the great blessing conferred upon them." And at first the Governor reported that everywhere there was visible a fair amount of readiness to accept wage labour. Any difficulty which arose came from the side of the planters. They were too angry to allow fair play to the change which had been made, or to refrain from using tyrannically the advantages in their hands. By every means in their power, by demanding enormous rents and by wholesale evictions, they strove to beat down the wages they would have to pay, and to impose upon the helplessness of the black labourers. The missionaries, the stipendiary magistrates, and the Governor himself, found it necessary to support the cause of the oppressed blacks. Considerable excitement was the consequence, and the Governor entirely lost the popularity he had once enjoyed. In the midst of this excitement the second Bill, the "Jamaica Prisons Bill," was somewhat hastily promulgated. There could be no doubt as to the malpractices prevalent in the prisons, but

The slaves
emancipated.
August 1838.

Reception of
the Prisons
Bill.

the circumstances attending the production of the Bill were perhaps needlessly irritating. A commissioner, Captain Pringle, had been appointed to examine and report upon the prisons. Without in any way mentioning the results of his inquiries to the Colonial Parliament, he had returned direct to England and given in the report on which the new Bill was based. And as it happened on the very day that the news had been received in England that the colonists had consented to immediate emancipation, the Prisons Bill—overriding the constitutional power of supervision belonging to the Colonial Parliament—placed in the hands of the Governor, checked only by his responsibility to the Queen in Council, the entire management of the prisons; a very poor return, in the opinion of the planters, for their acquiescence in the wishes of the English public. Irritating in itself, the Bill was not produced in a conciliatory manner. A friendly and argumentative despatch intended to soften its effect had accompanied it, but was kept back by the Governor till the Assembly should meet. An outburst of anger was the result. When in November the Assembly met, it at once passed resolutions declaring the Bill to be a violation of the constitutional rights of the colonists, and expressing its determination to “abstain from the exercise of any legislative functions, except those necessary to preserve the public credit, till they knew whether they were to be treated as free subjects . . . or as a conquered Colony.” This determination implied the most serious inconvenience. A number of annual laws were approaching the time of their expiration, and could not be renewed. Yet as they related to such matters as vagrancy, squatting, and contracts, they were of more than usual importance at the present conjuncture. But the Legislature clung to its resolutions, and was dissolved. As the Governor had foreseen, the Assembly which took its place displayed the same temper, refused to modify the resolutions, and was permanently prorogued.

The political deadlock resembled that which had preceded the Canadian rebellion, but with this important difference: in Canada the Assembly expressed the voice of the bulk of the people—unwise, perhaps, but claiming what they believed to be their rights against the encroachments of the dominant class,—while in Jamaica it represented a constituency of at most 2000 of a dominant class claiming their privileges against the mass of newly emancipated citizens. It was not unnatural however under the circumstances that the Government should pursue a similar course to that they had adopted in Canada. Though their

Proposal to
suspend the
Jamaica
constitution.

agent there, hampered by party influences at home and misled by his own impulsive character, had committed grave errors, the wisdom of establishing a temporary despotism, under the shadow of which a new constitution might be established, was scarcely to be questioned. If it was wise in Canada, it was surely wiser in Jamaica, where the whole framework of society was undergoing a violent change. The Government accordingly introduced a Bill, the principle of which was that the constitution of Jamaica should be suspended for five years, and the government placed in the hands of the Governor and a council of three commissioners charged with the duty of making such laws as the state of the Colony required. At the expiration of that time the constitution was to be restored. But as usual in English politics, the wisdom of the principle went for little in the heat of party strife. Questionable points in the detail of the Bill, and the management on the part of the Government of the circumstances which had rendered the Bill necessary, were fixed upon with avidity by the Opposition. The grounds set forth in the preamble for the action taken were declared to be inadequate. The promulgation of the Prisons Act without its accompanying despatch was regarded as a needless aggravation of its severity. The Government was charged with hastily snatching at an opportunity for abrogating the constitution. Sir Robert Peel, who led the attack, declared his wish that efforts at compromise should be made, and an opportunity given to the Assembly to withdraw from its false position. On this ground he opposed the Bill as it was going into committee after the second reading, and a division taken at this point showed a majority in favour of the Ministry of five only. A Government in a perpetual minority in the Lords, and able to rely upon a superiority of little more than twenty votes in the Commons, could not bear up against such a diminution of its narrow majority. Least of all, as Lord John Russell urged, could a Government thus slightly supported carry out with advantage to the public interest a struggle between the mother country and a contumacious Colony. The Ministry of Lord Melbourne thought it right to resign.

There could be little doubt that their position was not a dignified one. The vehemence with which every now and then they declared that they would not exist on sufferance shows how fully they recognised that they really did so exist, and the soreness which the position caused them. Probably they would all have been glad enough to have seen their opponents surrounded by the difficulties under which they had been

Resignation
of Ministry.
May 7th, 1839.

Peel declines
the Ministry
unless the
Queen's ladies
are changed.

themselves labouring. But it was not to be. A curious episode forced them back to their unenviable position of power. According to the forms of the Constitution, the Premier advised the Queen to send for the Duke of Wellington, who in his turn advised her to intrust the formation of the new Ministry to Sir Robert Peel. Peel undertook the duty; found adherents willing to serve with him; and laid the list before the Queen. But at the same time he told her that he thought it would be necessary to change some of the chief ladies of her household. The young Queen probably misunderstood the amount of the change intended. She had grown attached to those who had surrounded her since her accession to the Throne, and on whose friendship she could rely. She took fright at the idea of being left alone in the midst of strange surroundings, and consulted the outgoing Ministry as to the constitutional necessity of the change. They advised her that it was not necessary. She therefore wrote to Sir Robert Peel that, "having considered the proposal made by him to remove the ladies of her bedchamber, she could not consent to adopt a course which she considered to be contrary to usage, and which was repugnant to her feelings." Sir Robert Peel immediately wrote in answer that his sense of public duty compelled him to adhere to the opinion he had expressed, and that on this condition only would he accept office. The Queen again sought advice of her late Ministers on the subject; a Cabinet council was held, and their opinion was thrown into the shape of a formal minute, in which, after saying that "it was reasonable that the great offices in the Court and situations in the household held by members of Parliament should be included in political arrangements," they went on to state that they were "not of opinion that a similar principle should be extended to offices held by ladies in Her Majesty's household."

So strange an incident, so sudden a disappearance of the hopes of office felt by the Tories, naturally caused great party excitement. The matter was discussed from all points of view. To some it seemed a question of grave constitutional importance that the personal wish of the sovereign should override great party combinations; to some the position taken by the outgoing Ministry of acting as a united Cabinet after their resignation, and while the Queen was in correspondence with the leader of their opponents, seemed most questionable. And there was no lack among the disappointed Conservatives, outside the circle of the immediate leaders, of those who regarded the whole matter as a preconceived trick of the Liberals to retain office. The very simple and straight-

*Discussion of
the question.*

forward assertion of Lord Melbourne that this was not so disposes of this suspicion. The action of the outgoing Ministers was defended on the ground that, on the receipt of Peel's answer, negotiations with him had in fact ceased, and that they were the only advisers left to the Crown. The reasonableness of the Queen's opposition to the suggested changes is generally allowed; and the correctness of the constitutional principle upheld by Melbourne appears to be proved by its subsequent general acceptance, and by the fact that from this time onwards the Ladies of the Household (with the exception of the Mistress of the Robes) have been exempted from the alternations of political party.

In all probability there was a misconception at the bottom of the affair. Peel had not intended to remove any great number of the ladies. Nor was he probably very anxious to accept the difficulties which at that time surrounded the position of the Government. At all events, he was determined that he would not accept office unless he could occupy a commanding position. As a dissolution was regarded as a thing to be avoided, he would have had at once to face a majority in opposition. That majority, though small, had declared very lately its opinion in favour of the policy of two Ministers, Normanby and Morpeth. The wife of one of these and the sister of the other were among the Queen's ladies, and Peel did not think that he could possibly have carried out his government with any success unless he received some open sign of support from the Crown, such as the removal of the ladies would have given him.

The incident resulted in the restitution of the Whig Government, and its maintenance in office for two years longer, during which it dragged on its wearisome and inefficient career. Some slight alterations had been made in the ministerial arrangements. Lord Mulgrave had returned from Ireland in February, and had been called to the Upper House as Lord Normanby. His place was taken by Lord Ebrington, a man of equally liberal views. The retirement of Lord Glenelg, an able though somewhat dilatory statesman, allowed of a change of offices which finally resulted in the appointment of Lord Normanby to the Home Office, while the Colonies were intrusted to Lord John Russell. In the Lower House a change of some importance took place. Abercrombie, the Speaker, had not proved thoroughly efficient. Somewhat too irritable, and prone to take personal offence, he had not succeeded in establishing his authority; and, believing himself ill-used by the Government, he had resigned. Although Mr. Spring Rice, the Chancellor of

*Melbourne
returns to
power.
May 11.*

VICT.

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the Exchequer, had long coveted the post, the uncertainty of his election induced the Ministry to prefer as their nominee Mr. Shaw Lefevre, a man in every way well fitted for the office, and likely as a popular county gentleman to be accepted by the Opposition.

The new Colonial Minister was at once forced into prominence by the introduction under a new form of the Jamaica Bill, which had caused the late crisis. It adopted the principle on which Sir Robert Peel had insisted, and offered a *locus penitentie* to the Assembly. The crime of that Assembly had been its refusal to pass the necessary Bills. Those Bills were of two classes. The one consisted of Bills rendered necessary by the changed state of the country after the Emancipation—to regulate the unoccupied lands, the vagrant laws, the relations between master and servant, the militia, and the electoral qualification, touching in fact those questions which were brought to the front by the sudden creation, by the Emancipation Act, of a large body of new black citizens. The other class consisted of old Bills, which had always been considered necessary in the Colony, but which, being re-enacted yearly, had come to a natural conclusion, and required to be re-made. The Bill, instead of suspending the Constitution, referred these two classes of Bills under two clauses to the Assembly. If it refused with regard to the first class to make satisfactory arrangements, similar in principle to those made in Crown Colonies after emancipation, the Governor and the Council were to be authorised to enact the required laws. With regard to the second class, if the Assembly refused to renew the expired Acts within a certain limited time, the Governor and his Council might renew them by their own authority. Although the Bill nearly resembled the propositions of Sir Robert Peel, it did not pass without considerable opposition; and in the House of Lords its most important enactment, the first clause, was omitted. Hopeless of carrying out a firmer policy, Lord John Russell recommended the Commons to accept the remainder of the Bill rather than get no Bill at all. It therefore became law almost exactly as Sir Robert Peel had proposed two months previously. Whether the conduct of the Conservatives arose, as Sir Robert Peel asserted, from *bona fide* objections to the Bill, or whether it was a factious desire to catch for party purposes a few Radical votes which induced them to support the rights of the Jamaica Assembly, there is no doubt that the effect of the rejection of the more stringent clauses of the Bill was to perpetuate for many years the misgovernment of Jamaica.

Factionous
opposition of
Peel to the
Second
Jamaica Bill.

The Bill
mutilated and
passed.
July 1839.

The balance of political parties almost inevitably prevented the completion of any great measure of legislation, and the history of the remaining two years of Whig rule is occupied chiefly with matters of administration, and with abortive attempts on the part of the Ministers themselves and of their Radical supporters to advance measures which have subsequently been accepted as necessary by all parties. Little fault could be found with their administration; but their difficulties were gradually increasing on all sides, and a general feeling sprang up that they must give place to a more powerful government. The skill of Sir Robert Peel, who (while keeping his party together, and waging a very efficient party war) kept in check the violence of the old Tory element, and took care to declare the liberality of his own views, tended largely to this reaction.

It is probable also that the marriage of the Queen rendered a change of Ministry more possible. The Government had from the first taken up the position of the Queen's Government, and it was distinctly as the protectors of her personal wishes that they returned to power; and although Lord Melbourne behaved in all respects most honourably in his position of close friend and constant companion of the young Queen, it was undoubtedly true that her affection for him, and her dread of losing his unrestrained and fatherly friendship, was a great obstacle in the way of change. But at the close of the year 1839 she made up her mind to marry Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg Gotha. He had been invited to Windsor at the suggestion of Melbourne himself and King Leopold of Belgium, who foresaw what was likely to be the result. The Queen became deeply attached to him, and her marriage with him was at once decided upon. It is not the least among the virtues of Melbourne, not the least among the many proofs he gave of his sincere and high-minded affection for the Queen, that he thus supplied her with a husband who might permanently occupy the place of adviser he had himself hitherto held, and give her the support which her sex and years required. With what self-denying devotion Prince Albert effaced himself from political life, and gave himself up to the support and assistance of the Queen, is visible in every page of the future history of his career. The marriage removed the necessity for Melbourne's presence, and allowed the Queen to assume a more truly constitutional position than she had yet held. She could henceforward repose her confidence equally in the leader of either party, who might be the Minister of

Desire for a
change of
Ministry.

Made possible
by the Queen's
marriage.

Character and
position of
Prince Albert.

the people's choice. Some mistakes were made which tended at first to injure Prince Albert's popularity. A demand for £50,000 a year for his support could not but be regarded as exorbitant; the attempt to give him precedence over all the royal family by an Act of Parliament was injudicious. Nor was it, perhaps, prudent to omit all mention of the Protestantism of the Prince when the engagement was announced. The errors were, no doubt, caused by a somewhat undue friendship for the Queen. On all points the Ministry had to give way. The income was settled at £30,000; precedence at the Court was given to the Prince by the Queen's prerogative only, and a public declaration of Protestantism was elicited. Nor was it possible at first that the real worth of the Prince should be known. He was very young—a few months younger than the Queen—and it was not without some difficulty, and some occasional ridicule at his literary and artistic culture, which belonged rather to German than to English manners, that he succeeded in securing his position.

But it is not in a course of somewhat stunted legislation, or in the strife of parties within the walls of Parliament, that the real interest of the time is to be sought. It lies rather in this, that in it we can trace in all directions, disordered and shapeless, the continuation of the strenuous movements of popular life originated at the Reform Bill of 1832. Though at first they appeared to produce but little result, they gradually exerted a power on the public mind which forced even the Conservatives to accept and further them. Veiled as it was in many respects under the form of political aspiration, the popular movement was at bottom a social one. Though frequently regarded as a revolution, and though, in fact, it was a first step in a revolution, the Reform Bill had been the work of men trained in old political theories, and themselves belonging to the propertied class. The constituencies had indeed been largely increased, and the rearrangement of political power as between town and country had been considerable, but it was still in virtue of their property that the newly admitted electors enjoyed the advantages that had been given them. The measure in fact did little more than give a wide extension to the propertied class. But the movement which had resulted in the Bill was too deep to be thus limited. The desire for admission to some share in the national government was not merely political ambition; its object was thoroughly practical. To direct legislation into a course advantageous to themselves, and therefore as they believed to the country, was the desire of those who had been admitted to a share of political power. It was inevitable that

Causes of
social
agitation.

the same desire should exist in the classes still excluded, and that they in their turn should seek for the realisation of their wishes by similar means. It was thus that social and political questions were intermingled, although they assumed at first for the most part a political shape. The feeling in favour of continuing the work of the Reform Bill was represented in the House by the small body of men then known as Radicals; outside the House, by the large body of new voters. There was a constant pressure in Parliament from such men as Roebuck, Leader, and Grote, for still further extension of the franchise. They believed also that the influence of wealth, especially of territorial wealth, prevented the true expression of the will of the poorer voters. To check this influence, which they regarded as the chief blot in the representative system of England, they yearly produced a motion in favour of ballot at elections. The name of Grote the historian is indissolubly connected with the Bill. At first the effect of the efforts of the Radical party was to emphasise the divergence of views existing among the Liberals, and to drive the more influential and wealthy among them, with Lord John Russell at their head, to take up a Conservative attitude they were totally unable to maintain. Lord John even went so far as to declare "the finality" of the Reform Bill, and to say that he should consider himself guilty of a breach of faith if he took any part in large measures of reconstruction. Both the dominant parties in the House had thus declared their determination to listen to no further increase of the political power of the masses. It was consequently outside Parliament that the agitation was chiefly carried on.

Ever since 1836 the trade of the country had been depressed. As a necessary consequence, there was considerable suffering among the working classes. Added to this, the frost of the winter of 1837-38 was of unprecedented severity, the Thames being frozen over in London. The hardship attending such a state of things was increased by the high price of food. The duty on corn kept up its price, which ranged during the year 1838 from 69s. to 79s. a quarter. Nor was the price of meat low. It is mentioned in public estimates at the general average of 5s. a stone of 8 lbs.; sold at retail prices, this would probably give an average of 8d. Cold, hunger, and want of employment were all at work among the people. The severe system of the new Poor Law, as yet only four years old, naturally offered itself as an object of bitter complaint to the suffering multitude. The cessation of outdoor relief and of grants in aid of wages were regarded as instances of cruel and tyrannous oppression.

Sufferings of
the poor.

It was not only the poor themselves, or the agitators who were making use of them, who joined in this unreasonable attack. Losing sight of the general and natural causes at work to produce misery, many well-intentioned and educated men believed that it might be traced chiefly to the action of the new Poor Law. This feeling found expression in the House of Commons; and in the Upper House Lord Stanhope and the Bishop of Exeter combined in heaping abuse upon the Law. Yet the annual report of the Commissioners continued to speak with full confidence of the success attained. And although no doubt the facts which they adduced were selected for the purpose of putting their case in its best light, they afford sufficiently striking and sound proofs of the real value of the new law. In districts where fifty or sixty able-bodied men had habitually been relieved during the winter, no single case of such relief was now to be found, yet the strictest inquiry in certain districts in Kent failed to produce any cases of unrelieved distress. The clergy, originally much opposed to the restriction of charity, were gradually coming round to confess the utility of the change, and the Commissioners boasted, apparently with truth, that there was already a saving of between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 on the rates. None the less did demagogues find in the new arrangements a ready means of exciting the anger of the people.

In the towns other general causes of suffering were at work. The introduction of machinery had produced the effect which, when it is combined with depression of trade, must necessarily follow it. In the competition for such trade as there was, the hand-worker was driven to ruin, and cheap mechanical processes superseded human labour. With the want of an abundant supply of work wages began to fall, and in their attempt to keep them up the workmen fell into habits of combination. In nearly every manufacturing town Trades Unions made their appearance. The objects of these organisations were: first, to enable the workman to cope on equal terms with the capitalist by means of "strikes," compelling the master to forfeit his contracts or to raise wages, and of "turn-outs," which were strikes, not for the purpose of raising wages, but for inflicting punishment upon the masters who happened to have broken any of the laws of the Unions; secondly, to produce an equality of receipts among the workmen, regardless of the superior gifts or industry possessed by any individual among them; thirdly, the repression of piecework, which was regarded as mere robbery. "Every man," said one of the Trades Union orators, "who, by work-

Rise of Trades Unions.

ing at piecework, earns 40s. a week, when the ordinary wage is 20s., is robbing his neighbour of a sovereign." These combinations, though in themselves they were not at this time regarded as illegal, were constantly tempted to have recourse to violence. They were governed each by its body of delegates, paid pretty highly at the cost of the members. The ordinary members of the Unions were under promise to obey their leaders' commands, which frequently took the form of orders to "picket,"—that is, to watch and ill-use men who broke their rules,—or to execute the vengeance of the Society upon interloping workmen employed by the masters during a strike. There can be little doubt that Trades Unions, affording as they do organised centres round which the political and social aspirations of the lower classes can easily gather, have been of great advantage to the working men. But their first effect was to increase the evils of poverty. At a time of depression of trade they offered a fresh difficulty to the employment of capital; and some of the greatest and most complete inventions in machinery, inventions which still further lessened the demand for labour, can be traced to them.

The evils of competition were however so obvious, and in some cases so repulsive, that it was not the working classes alone who sought means to remedy them. The attention of philanthropists had been already attracted to the evils attending the large employment of children in factories. They suffered both in body and mind. They were weakened by the long hours of labour passed in an unwholesome atmosphere, and kept in ignorance by the constant occupation which debarred them from all opportunities of education. Lord Ashley came forward as the chief advocate of their cause. As early as the year 1833 a Bill had been passed for the protection of factory children. Nine hours a day was fixed as their working time when engaged in factory labour, from which children under nine years of age were entirely excluded. It was a law which clashed with the principle of free competition, and excited opposition on both sides. The employers desired cheap labour and long hours; the parents of the children were not as yet sufficiently educated to see the advantages secured to them by the Bill, and were desirous of getting all they could from their children's labour. The law was therefore evaded; and in 1838 Lord Ashley found it necessary to bring in a Bill for the more efficient carrying out of the regulation of factories. It was however lost by a large majority. Political economy, regarded not as a statement of results from certain causes but as a code of laws to be carefully followed, was at that time

Failure of Lord Ashley's Factory Act. 1838.

triumphant in the House. So entirely was the success and happiness of the country held to depend upon the success of the capitalist that the view stated by Sir Robert Peel, that to limit the hours of child-labour was a restriction upon trade which would tend to drive capital from England, was at once accepted as a final argument against the Bill. Yet, while a serious injury was inflicted upon the youth of the nation in the name of political economy, its laws, as the Radicals pointed out, were flagrantly broken by the maintenance of the protective duty upon corn which obliged the already suffering poor to pay an undue price for the most necessary article of subsistence.

The question of Education, emphasised by Lord Ashley's efforts to restrain the employment of factory children, was gradually becoming important. Lord Brougham, with the fervid activity which marked his partisanship, had for years been impressing on the Parliament and people the necessity of removing from England the stigma of being the worst educated country in Northern Europe. He had succeeded, even as early as 1818, in obtaining returns clearly exhibiting the state of the facts. It was however not till fifteen years later that the Government of the country deigned to take any notice of the question. In 1833 the Reformed Parliament went so far as to grant the pitiful sum of £20,000 for the maintenance of education. This sum was distributed through the agency of two Societies—the National Society, in exclusive connection with the English Church, and the British and Foreign School Society upon a somewhat broader basis. It was employed to encourage the building of schools, upon the condition that the grant should be met by considerable local subscription. A few more schools were thus no doubt called into existence, but the very conditions of the grant secured that they should be chiefly in wealthy districts; just where schools were most wanted they could not be obtained. By both Societies the Roman Catholic poor—and they were numerous—were entirely excluded from education. From that time onwards repeated efforts had been made, and committees appointed on the subject, and a good deal of increase of education had taken place.

In December 1837 Lord Brougham suggested a plan for national education. He expressed his wish that the interference of Government should be as limited as possible, but he believed that by a system of incentives and encouragements the principles of education could be generally introduced, and a school put within the reach of all. His reason for objecting to any set scheme was the number of schools already existing. There were

Necessity for attempting national education.

Lord Brougham's plan. 1837.

about 50,000, of which 40,000 were voluntary without endowment. Since 1820 the number of children attending school had grown from 600,000 to 1,120,000—730,000 of whom were paying for their education. He in no sense wished to acknowledge the right of every individual to education. His plan was the establishment of an Education Board of commissioners, among whom should be some of the Ministers of the Crown. To them should be intrusted the duty of distributing Parliamentary grants and charitable funds. All grants were to be refused to schools of an exclusive character, where no churchman or no dissenter, as the case might be, could act as teacher. Any parish might form for itself a school committee, composed of ratepayers, with the right to levy a rate for school purposes. Religious teaching, while unsectarian, was to be maintained. The shortness of the session prevented the full consideration of the Bill. In June Mr. Wise, Chairman of the Central Society for Education, moved in the Lower House for an address to the Queen, asking her to appoint commissioners, with the same sort of powers as those above mentioned. The debate brought out the inefficiency of the existing system. In five towns of Lancashire, in a population of 841,000, only 27,000 children went to school. In Bethnal Green, where there were 14,000 children between five and fourteen, only 2000 received any education. Lord John Russell did not consider the time arrived for any general scheme, and therefore opposed Mr. Wise. The motion was negatived, but by a majority of four only.

So close a division induced Lord John Russell himself in the next session to produce a scheme. Although it came definitely before the House only when an increase of £10,000 to the education grant was demanded, the plan had already been explained in Parliament, and formulated in an order of Council to which publicity had been given, and which had already roused the opposition of the Church, and called forth very numerous adverse petitions. The plan consisted in the first place, like Brougham's, of the establishment of a Committee of Council, consisting of members of the Government, who were to be an Education Board. The Board was to be intrusted with the distribution of the Parliamentary grant. Of this £10,000 was confined to the two Societies which had already received it; but in the distribution of the residue the hands of the Committee were not tied. They were neither compelled to follow the existing custom of making grants only to meet local subscriptions, nor to give only through the medium of the two great Societies. No school

Mr. Wise's plan. 1838.

Lord John Russell's plan. 1839.

was to receive any share unless it submitted to inspection. For the supply of teachers a Normal School, under Government, was to be established, where children and teachers were to be trained in the principles of Christianity, but the rights of conscience were to be respected.

When the matter came before the House it at once encountered a storm of opposition. It placed, it was urged, control over the religious education of the people in the hands of a political Board. It allowed that Board to give grants to all sorts of schools; it withdrew from the Church what had been something like a monopoly, for the grants to meet subscriptions had naturally fallen principally to the wealthiest body. Lord Stanley, though he had himself originated a similar plan in Ireland, led the Opposition. According to him (and he supported it by statistics), the present system was working extraordinarily well. Even Lord Ashley, actuated by Protestant enthusiasm, opposed the scheme. It was well supported by Ministers and their followers, and the need of education was placed in a very glaring light. The statistics of ignorance were gloomy, and a great proportion of the returned scholars proved on inquiry to be Sunday scholars only. At Newcastle 49 out of every 100 children received no instruction. At Gateshead 13 per cent. only attended schools, and in seventeen large towns the average was only 1 in 12. In Manchester it was only 1 in 35. Of the 3,000,000 children in England half were in a state of complete ignorance. But the dread of touching the monopoly of the Church was such that it was only by a majority of five that the Government was allowed to bring in its Bill. When £30,000 was demanded for education a fresh opposition was raised, and Lord Mahon went so far as to attempt to prove that education out of the hands of the clergy was a direct cause of crime. A division showed a majority of only two in favour of the grant. Of course the Opposition in the Lords was still more decided. It was led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who produced resolutions of great length stating that the ministerial scheme was open to objections with reference to the arrangements made for the religious instruction of children and other important details, and that the House of Lords therefore found itself obliged to present a humble address to the Queen to put an end to all immediate steps with respect to the establishment of general education. One Bishop alone, the Bishop of Norwich, supported the Bill. As usual in the Upper House, the Conservatives had it all their own way; the resolutions of the Archbishop were carried by a majority of 111.

Opposition to
it in both
Houses.

The Ministry, however, did not quite give way. They dropped their Normal School, but retained their Committee of Council; induced the Queen to express her disapproval of the Lords' address; and proceeded to carry out their system of grants. The indignant clergy at first refused to accept any share, but the process of self-denial did not long continue; they shortly contrived to absorb nearly the whole of it, and the dissenters were still left unprovided for.

Small though this beginning of national education is, it at least shows the advance of social interest in the country, at the same time that it reveals the mass of ignorance which was ready to lend itself to the plausible harangues of discontented demagogues. It is difficult to find a more complete proof of ignorance, at all events in the case of the agricultural poor, than an incident which occurred at Boughton, near Canterbury, in the spring of 1838. A certain John Thom, a Cornishman, had some years before made himself notorious by marching about in rich dresses, and calling himself Sir William Courtney, Knight of Malta. His personal presence, which was striking, and a certain gift of eloquence had given him some influence in the neighbourhood. He was subsequently found to be mad, and was placed in confinement, but on proving harmless had been intrusted to the care of his own family. He escaped from them and reappeared in Kent, resumed his old position, persuaded the farmers that he was by right a very wealthy man, that he would shortly enter into his property and give them their land rent free. He proceeded to inveigh against all laws, more particularly the new Poor Law, collected a band of followers, and marched about asking the labourers to join him. He then went a step further, and declared that he was the Messiah. His strange pretensions received a certain support, and the increase of his fanatical followers appeared so dangerous that it was thought necessary to attempt his apprehension. He shot the constable who tried to take him. Soldiers were summoned from Canterbury. He called upon his followers to behave like men, and at once stepped before them and shot the officer in command. The soldiers then fired, and eight or ten of the rioters, with Thom among them, were killed. The legal proceedings which followed this little riot exhibit, the most extraordinary credulity on the part of the people, who had believed in the miracles of Thom, had received the Eucharist from his hands, had worshipped him, and fully believed that he and they were rendered invulnerable.

Suffering, ignorant, organised for definite opposition to their capi-

Illustration of
the ignorance
of the people.

talist masters, irritated by the unavoidable harshness which attended the honest working of the new Poor Law, driven to despair by a system of competition which seemed to demand from them all the toil while the capitalists got all the profits,—the people listened willingly to pictures of an ideal state of society, freed alike from restrictive corn-laws, over competition and grasping capitalists. Previous events had led them to believe that political power was the road by which they might reach such a happy state, and the result was Chartism. In the course of 1838 the discontent began to assume dangerous proportions, and found means to express itself in a formula known as the People's Charter, which claimed five political points—universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, abolition of a property qualification for a seat in Parliament, and payment of members. The Legislature was thus to be at once under the immediate supervision of the constituencies, and open to working men. The movement, composite in character, was very widespread and very threatening. It found local leaders in all parts of England. The more prominent were a Dissenting minister of the name of Stephens; Vincent, a working man; Oastler, who confined his attacks chiefly to the Poor Law; and Feargus O'Connor, a man of fine gifts and presence, but with a taint of madness which ultimately destroyed his mind. Riotous meetings were held in all directions, and their effect was heightened by their being frequently held at night with torchlight processions. The speeches made at them were marked by wild assertions of the objects and advantages of the Charter, and scarcely veiled suggestions of an appeal to physical force. "Universal suffrage," said Mr. Stephens at one of these meetings, a great assembly of 200,000 men on Kersal Moor, near Manchester—"the meaning of universal suffrage is that every working man in the land has a right to a good coat, a good hat, a good roof, a good dinner, no more work than will keep him in health, and as much wages as will keep him in plenty. If," he went on to say, "the authorities in Manchester had not declared confidence in the peaceable character of the people, he would have brought 10,000 armed men with him, and would have exhorted every man capable of bearing arms to flock to the standard and fight the battles of the Constitution." It was not in the north country only that the disturbances made their appearance. Devizes, Llanidloes, Sheffield, Bolton, Newcastle, the Potteries, and London itself, were all disturbed, more or less, with riots; and it was not only in tumultuous assemblies that the claims of the Chartists were heard. In 1839 delegates were chosen, and a national Convention

Rise of
Chartism.

usually holding its sittings in London was formed; and the People's Charter grew into a great national petition, signed by 1,200,000 men. When it was brought into the House of Commons by Mr. Attwood (June 14), it was at once rejected. On the 12th of July Mr. Attwood moved that the petition should be referred to a Select Committee. As a matter of course his motion was lost by a large majority.

The People's
Charter
rejected.

The petition had been already discredited by a riot which had taken place on the 4th of July in Birmingham, and which had only been suppressed with difficulty by the military. The temper of the organisation had been displayed in a proclamation in which the Convention spoke of the action of the police as "an unjust and wanton outrage committed by a bloodthirsty and unconstitutional force from London." The rejection of the petition was followed by a still worse riot (July 15). For some hours, almost unchecked by the police, the populace held possession of Birmingham, and employed themselves in the wanton destruction of property. The Duke of Wellington declared he had never seen a stormed and sacked town in so bad a plight. This great outbreak was followed almost immediately by an even more open outrage at Newport, in Monmouthshire. It was the centre of a hilly district occupied by a mining population. The Chartist doctrines had been disseminated among the miners principally through the agency of a Mr. Frost, a linen-draper in Newport. Created a magistrate of the town at the recommendation of the townsfolk, he had continued his seditious behaviour, and had been removed from the magistracy by Lord John Russell. In conjunction with Zephaniah Williams, who kept a beer-shop in Colebrookdale, and William Jones, a watchmaker of Pontypool, he seems to have determined to assault Newport on the night of Sunday, the 4th of November. The insurgents were to march on the town in three divisions, break down the bridge over the Usk, attack the troops stationed in the town, and stop the mail, the non-arrival of which at Birmingham was to be a signal for some sort of general rising in the north of England. The junction of the three parties failed, and Frost with his division marched single-handed upon the town. He was there encountered with great courage and skill by Mr. Philips, the Mayor, who garrisoned the chief inn in the place, and beat off the assailants not without some loss of life. The three leaders were captured and brought to trial, while Philips, who had been wounded in the encounter, was invited to Windsor, treated with all honour, and made a knight. These disorders were of necessity

Riots at
Birmingham
and Newport.

met by active measures of repression, and by frequent Government prosecutions. But the Administration did not find it necessary to have recourse to extreme methods; the constabulary in some of the larger towns was reorganised, and a small addition of troops asked for and obtained from Parliament; but in other respects the existing laws were found sufficient to meet the evil.

The weakness of the Ministry in Parliament and the disturbed state of the country induced the Conservatives at the beginning of 1840 to move a vote of want of confidence. The ground on which it rested was the inability of the Ministry to secure that peace at home and abroad which it was its duty to secure; and the cause of this failure, according to the assertion of their opponents, was to be traced to their weakness in tampering with disturbances both in England and in Ireland, and to the meddling policy they pursued abroad. They were however able to make out a case good enough to secure the support of the House; and the motion of want of confidence was lost by twenty-one votes. By a narrow majority of nine they also succeeded in saving their policy with regard to China from an adverse motion of Sir James Graham. Yet every division displayed their real weakness, and their position was rendered worse by the growing indignation at the undisguised tenacity with which they clung to office.

The great party battle-field, both this year and the next, was Ireland.

It has been already mentioned that the Government had succeeded in passing the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill through both Houses only by accepting the adverse amendment of the Lords. This virtual victory of the Opposition was followed up by the introduction by Lord Stanley of a Bill for regulating the registration of voters in Ireland. A system of registration had existed there before the passing of the Reform Bill. A new system had been introduced in England; but, before assimilating the process in the two countries, it was thought desirable to see how the experiment would work. It had proved successful; and as there were some palpable deficiencies in the registration arrangements in Ireland, it was understood that the time had arrived for bringing the two into harmony. But Government, although it appeared to recognise the duty, had neglected to produce any Bill for the purpose. That duty the Opposition, represented by Lord Stanley, now undertook. By the existing system the registration in Ireland was revised before permanent officials (assistant barristers), as a part of the quarter sessions work at the assize towns. There was no appeal,

Vote of want
of confidence
defeated.
Jan. 31, 1840.
Failure of
Stanley's Irish
Registration
Bill.
May 1840.

and each claimant had to make good his claim, which was objected to as a matter of course. Having succeeded in making it good, he was given a certificate, available for eight years; but, as he might procure such a certificate every half-year, an easy opening was given for the creation of fraudulent votes by the dishonest distribution of these certificates at election time. Stanley proposed to bring the systems of the two countries into harmony; to make registration annual; to allow names to stand on the register without production of fresh proof unless objected to, and to give an appeal from the revising barrister to the judges. It is difficult to understand the objection to the Bill, but it seems to have been regarded as a covert method of excluding a number of voters from the constituency, and as such was vehemently opposed by the Government and by O'Connell. Morpeth declared that it would obstruct the legitimate use of the franchise. O'Connell regarded it as a Bill which would entirely disfranchise Ireland by enormously increasing the difficulties in the way of keeping a vote. The register was to be opened every year, and, as the Tories would dispute every Liberal or peasant vote and carry the matter if decided against them before the judges, the peasant would have to walk fifty or sixty miles to the assize town twice every year to make good his claim. Stanley, who had originally parted from the Reformers on disapproving of their weak and conciliatory action in Ireland, and who was therefore the declared enemy of O'Connell and his friends, found himself at once assaulted with extreme violence. O'Connell, with his usual want of self-restraint, spoke of him as "scorpion Stanley" outside the House, and within the House heaped every sort of abuse upon him. Although frequently beaten in division—for the virulence of O'Connell's partisanship, and the apparent reasonableness of the Bill they were opposing, had withdrawn some support from the Ministers—the Government threw every form and sort of obstacle in the way of the measure. No less than ten divisions were taken on it, in only one of which did the Government secure a majority. Yet the interposition of every form of delay was so successful that Stanley, drawing attention to the unusual and obstinate opposition he had encountered, and to the lateness of the season, prudently withdrew his Bill, promising however to re-introduce it in the next session.

This he accordingly did; but on this occasion the Government attempted a new method of thwarting him. Lord Morpeth introduced a counter proposition, which, while it contained nearly the same provisions as the uncompleted Bill of the previous year, had tacked to it a provision

Failure of
Morpeth's Irish
Registration
Bill.
April 1841.

intended to make it attractive to the Irish party in the House, and thus to outbid Stanley. This provision was a definition of the franchise, which was, by Lord Morpeth's proposition, to be given to every man rated at £5 to the poor-rate. The outcry against this Bill on the part of the Conservatives was very great. Much had been said by the Government of the finality of the old Reform Bill, and here there appeared to be a distinct alteration and lowering of the franchise. It was urged that the Bill was nothing but a new Reform Bill in disguise. Many of the more conservative Liberals were themselves alarmed at it; and the Government, who appeared really to have no opinion but what was supplied them by others, made no difficulty in raising the proposed franchise to £8. For four nights a bitter discussion was carried on, terminating in the passage of the second reading by a majority of five only. In committee the Government encountered fresh embarrassments. Lord Howick, who had seceded from the Ministry, introduced an amendment of no great importance in itself, but which was carried against Government by a majority of twenty-one. Defeat however produced no result; they accepted the amendment, and proceeded with their measure. Even the final destruction of the Bill, which was thrown out by eleven votes, failed to loosen the hold with which they clung to office.

Defeat of
Ministry.
April 26, 1841.

A still more complete defeat was necessary, and room for such a defeat was found in their financial policy. Mr. Spring Rice, who had been Chancellor of the Exchequer since the retirement of Lord Spencer in 1835, was not a careful financier. As a rule, neither the actual receipts nor the expenditure corresponded with his estimates. But he had no doubt laboured under much difficulty; the depression of trade and of agriculture prevalent at the time and the difficulties in Canada had both limited the revenue and increased the expenses. A certain number of taxes had also been taken off, and the result for the last few years had been a constantly increasing deficit. In pursuance of some changes which had taken place in the Ministry in 1839, Mr. Spring Rice had retired from office. Room was found for him in the Upper House as Lord Montague, and Mr. Francis Baring was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. The new Chancellor proved no more successful than his predecessor. Though he honestly attempted to meet his difficulties, events had proved too strong for him. Trade did not improve; the Canadian expenses continued; and, in addition, a war had broken out in China.

Financial
difficulties.

The revenue had also been very largely decreased by the somewhat reckless adoption of a very excellent reform. The condition of the post-office had for some years occupied public attention. The arrangements were in many respects very inconvenient, and in spite or rather perhaps in consequence of the high rates charged, though the trade of the country was increasing the receipts of the department were falling off. The expense of postage pressed heavily upon the poor and on the mercantile classes, an inordinate amount of office-work was required to settle the sum chargeable upon each letter, which varied according to its weight, the distance it had to travel, and the means of carriage to be employed. A great waste of time attended the distribution and rendered frequent deliveries impossible; it was calculated that on an average two minutes were employed in delivering and receiving the payment for each letter in London. Mr. Rowland Hill has the credit of suggesting in a pamphlet a method of removing these inconveniences. He advocated the application to the post-office of a principle which was gradually making its way with regard to taxation, and urged that a low rate of postage would, by the increase of correspondence thus secured, render the post-office more profitable; that a uniform postage would get rid of much useless clerks' work, and that the prepayment of letters would render their distribution easy, and give opportunity for frequent deliveries. His suggestions were adopted, and a uniform prepaid postage of a penny upon the half-ounce substituted for the old rates. Much opposition was offered to the plan. The Postmaster-General pointed out that it would require no less than 480,000,000 letters at the reduced rate to produce the revenue derived from 24,000,000, which was the number then delivered yearly. No apparatus, he declared, could be devised for carrying on so enormous a business, no building would be large enough to contain it. In spite of the threatened diminution of revenue the Government boldly determined to risk the change, and the result in the first year was a loss to the country of £1,000,000. Though the wisdom of making the change at the moment may have been questionable, the soundness of the principle has been thoroughly vindicated. The number of letters has risen to more than three times the figure which caused the despair of Lord Lichfield, not the slightest difficulty has been found in carrying on the business, and the clear revenue derived from the Office is considerably more than £3,000,000.

There already existed a deficit of £2,678,000 on the last three Budgets. If the loss on the post-office should prove to be as great as

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Introduction of
penny postage.

was expected, it seemed likely that at the end of 1840 there would be an arrear of nearly £6,000,000. For, while Mr. Baring's Budget, May 15, 1840. Baring estimated the expenditure of the year 1840-41 at £49,432,000, he was afraid to put the income at more than £46,700,000. To meet the alarming deficiency there was no resource according to the existing system of finance but increased taxation; and, as taxes once removed could scarcely be reimposed, the only course left open to the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to suggest that a percentage should be added to the existing taxes. The expedient did not prove successful; the revenue fell short of the estimate, and at the beginning of the financial year 1841 there proved to be a deficit of not less than £1,800,000. Nor could the Chancellor of the Exchequer honestly speak of the coming year except as one of increased expenditure. He estimated his requirements at £50,700,000, and expected at the close to find himself with a deficit of £2,400,000. The want of elasticity in the revenue was capable of easy explanation. The diminution had arisen chiefly on molasses, sugar, wine, spirits, tea, and the post-office. High differential duties restricted the use of the two first articles; the prospect of a commercial treaty with France naturally checked for a time the importation of wine; the extraordinary spread of the temperance movement in Ireland under the influence of Father Matthew explained the diminution of the spirit duties; while the tea-trade was hampered by the war with China; and the new arrangements of the post-office entailed great initial expenses. Under these circumstances, since honest and careful endeavours to balance the Budget on the old system had proved an entire failure, Mr. Baring and his colleagues determined to have recourse to a large application of the Free-trade principle. Two commodities, timber and sugar, especially lent themselves to this treatment. In the case of both of them large differential duties protected Colonial production. While the duty on Colonial timber was 10s. a load, the duty on Baltic timber was 55s. a load; while Colonial sugar paid 24s. a cwt., foreign sugar paid 63s. Baring proposed, in each case, very largely to destroy this difference. With regard to timber, he suggested that the 10s. should be raised to 20s. on Colonial timber; the 55s. reduced to 50s. on Baltic timber. With regard to sugar, while the 24s. a cwt. on Colonial sugar was left unaltered, the duty of 63s. on foreign sugar was to be reduced to 36s. According to the Free-trade view this partial opening of the market would produce such an increase of importation that it would be safe to estimate

the produce of the timber duty at £650,000, and of the sugar duty at £700,000, in advance of their ordinary return.

Even this increase still left a considerable deficit to be made up; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer intimated that the House need be under no fear as to its inability to supply what was wanted, if a measure was carried which the Government had in contemplation, and which Lord John Russell had already suggested in a motion he had made that the House should form itself into a committee to consider the Corn Laws. As it was plain that without a declaration of Lord John Russell's intention the Budget was imperfect, it became necessary to state that he had in view the substitution of a fixed duty of 8s. a quarter for the existing duties on wheat. The great war with France had proved extraordinarily advantageous to the landlords and farmers; the price of corn had become enormous, very inferior classes of land had been forced into cultivation, and rents were very high. The Corn Laws adopted since the cessation of the war had been calculated, as far as possible, to continue this prosperity. By the last settlement of these laws in 1828, the duty on corn had been arranged on what was called a sliding-scale—that is to say, it increased as the price of corn declined—with the intention of keeping up the price, and as far as possible equalising it. When wheat was at 64s. a quarter, the duty on importation was 23s. 8d. a quarter; at 69s. the duty fell to 16s. 8d.; at 73s. and upwards it became 1s. only. Two evil effects arose from this: the one inherent in all protective duties, the increase of price; the other connected with the uncertainty of the duty, which either checked the legitimate corn trade by rendering the calculations of traders nugatory, or made it entirely speculative. The good harvests which followed the Reform Bill had allowed interest in the Corn Laws to flag; but when, in 1837, a cycle of bad years set in, they again rose to great importance, and the merchants and manufacturers, seeing that conditions were changed and that they no longer had so exclusive a command of the trade of the world as had been the case during the war, were no longer willing to bear with indifference the injury which the Corn Laws inflicted on them, and began to clamour for their complete abolition. In 1837 the Anti-Corn Law League sprang into existence in Lancashire. Cheap bread by degrees became a popular demand; but, as a first instalment, a fixed duty, avoiding at all events some of the present evils, would have been thankfully received.

It was a very bold and a very wise Budget; but it touched on burning

questions, and laid the Government open to assault on several sides. Before the question of the Corn Laws was brought forward, the Conservatives, headed by Lord Sandon, attacked the alteration in the sugar duties. In this assault the supporters of Protection as an economical system found assistance in the enthusiasm of the slave-trade abolitionists. Not only was the alteration of the differential duties a step towards Free-trade, but it brought the slave-grown sugar of foreign countries into competition with the products of free colonial industry. It was in vain to point out that other slave-grown commodities were not excluded from the English market; that the establishment of commercial friendship with the Brazils might afford a means of checking slavery there; or that so

The Ministry
defeated.
May 18, 1841.

much had been done already for the sake of slaves that it was hard to burden the English consumer further for their benefit. The combined influence of party spirit and philanthropy proved too strong for the Government, and their Budget was rejected. Even this defeat failed to drive the Ministry from office. They determined to risk a dissolution, and to go to the country with the cry of Free-trade and cheap bread. Meanwhile they proceeded as if nothing had happened; brought in the Bill for the sugar duties at the old rates, and fixed the 4th of June for the introduction of the resolutions with regard to the Corn Laws. But Peel and the Conservatives were determined to frustrate the tactics of the Ministry, and to drive them from the offices to which they appeared so attached. He therefore gave notice that he would move a vote of want of confidence on the 27th of May, thus forestalling Lord John Russell's resolutions. Thus, uncommitted with regard to Free-trade, he could point out that the Government, unable to pass any important measure in the Commons, and in a perpetual minority in the Lords, had not the confidence of the nation. At last, in a full House of 624 members, the vote of want of confidence was passed by a majority of one. Such a vote should imply, and has nearly always implied, the immediate resignation of Ministers. But, consistent to the end in their questionable love of office, the Whigs still determined to risk a dissolution. Peel had however known what he was about when he struck the blow. He knew how entirely discredited

Dissolution.
Fall of Mel-
bourne's
Ministry.
Aug. 30, 1841.

the Ministry was; he knew that the appeal to Free-trade would be regarded merely as a party move. As such it was apparently taken by the nation, and the new elections placed in the hands of the Conservative leader a majority of ninety. The meeting of Parliament was immediately followed by a

fresh declaration of want of confidence, and the Ministry had at length to succumb.

While the weakness of their domestic administration was thus driving the Whigs from office, their foreign policy had met with considerable success. The foreign affairs of Great Britain, important though they were, had been allowed to fall almost entirely into the management of one man; and the policy of England, during the Whig Ministry from 1835 onwards, may without exaggeration be spoken of as the policy of Lord Palmerston. The Treaties of Vienna had left Austria, Russia, and Prussia in a position of great power. Their subsequent union in what is called the Holy Alliance was an attempt to make that power paramount over the whole of Europe. The maintenance of their influence required, as they believed, the maintenance of despotic principles of government. Against these principles and this influence England had set its face from the time of Canning. And though the French under the Kings of the Restoration were no lovers or supporters of liberty, the Revolution of July, putting Louis Philippe a popular monarch upon the throne, had naturally brought France into a close community of view with England. Lord Palmerston was the inheritor and earnest supporter of the policy of Canning. In alliance with France, he had supported the Queens of Portugal and Spain for the purpose of establishing in those countries constitutional principles, and thus forming an alliance of Western States, freely governed by constitutional monarchs, as a counterpoise to the alliance of the Eastern despots. It was with the same object, or more properly speaking with the object of restraining the overweening ambition of the Czar, the greatest of these three potentates, that he plunged into the intricacies of the Eastern Question. Peaceful in pretension, theoretically a supporter of the principle of non-intervention, his incessant busy activity, his audacity and determination to carry through the plans he had conceived, drove him to intervene frequently in the affairs of other countries, and brought England more than once to the verge of war. But the brilliant success which attended most of his plans, the unquestionable importance which he acquired personally in Europe, and the high position he won for England, secured his pardon for such inconsistency. Disliked and mistrusted by many, attacked by the intrigues of his own colleagues in the Cabinet, he was yet the only member of the Cabinet who, upon the close of the Ministry, could be regarded as having constantly risen in reputation and secured the general approbation of the people.

Foreign affairs.

Palmerston's
policy.

On the accession of the Queen, the interest of the affairs of Spain and Portugal had nearly come to an end. Although no brilliant success had attended the cause of the constitutional Queens, although the English legion after much useful work had been disbanded in disaster, it was obvious that the despotic party was constantly losing ground. It was plain that the party in favour of constitutional government would be subject for a while to division within itself, to intrigue, and many forms of weakness, but it was certain sooner or later to be triumphant. In the light of subsequent events, perhaps the most important point to be mentioned in the affairs of Spain is the gradual growth of mistrust between the English and French Governments. Palmerston could never bring himself to see that the French were honourably carrying out the principles of the Quadruple Alliance, and conceived a disbelief in the honesty of French professions fruitful of future quarrels. In fact the close approximation to France which had followed upon the events of the years 1830-32 was somewhat unreal; except in the one point, that both countries were in their domestic policy inclined to liberal and constitutional courses, there was no real identity of interest between them. There was no exact opposition in their interests, but each had objects of its own. Almost immediately upon the appearance of difficulties in the East this divergence of view became apparent.

The chief factor at this time in the Eastern Question was Egypt. Mehemet Ali, an Albanian by birth, had, by his ability and determination, raised himself to a position in Egypt which seemed to threaten the Turkish empire. The Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi (in 1833) had placed Russia in the position of sole defender of the Porte. The gradual advances of Russia, both in Europe and in Asia, had begun to excite the attention of English statesmen. To restrict its further aggrandisement became a chief object of the policy of Lord Palmerston; and, in order to put some obstacle in the way of its advance in Europe, he was determined to withdraw Turkey from its state of dependence—if possible to call the apparently dying empire to fresh life, and to secure its integrity by European guarantees. Mahmoud II., now an old man but still full of vigour, had done much in the way of reconstitution. He had seen the necessity of making Turkey more European in its form of civilisation if it was to be a European power; and Palmerston appears to have had strong hopes that such a course might be successfully pursued and the empire revived. It was in accordance with this view that in 1838 he negotiated a Commercial Treaty which re-

Spain and
Portugal.

The Eastern
Question.

Palmerston's
efforts to
revivify
Turkey.

moved some of the chief obstacles to the mercantile intercourse between Turkey and the other nations of Europe. Although treaties existed by which English goods were imported into Turkey on payment of a duty of 3 per cent., and Turkish goods exported at the same rate, practically the imposts laid on trade were so heavy that commerce was nearly impossible. The treaties were kept to the letter at the place of landing and embarkation, but the goods were so loaded with internal duties that the merchants paid often as much as 60 per cent. The influence and skill of Lord Ponsonby, the Minister at Constantinople, and Henry Bulwer, subsequently Lord Dalling, Secretary to the Embassy, were successfully used to obtain a treaty by which, on a certain definite small increase of export and import duties, all internal duties together with monopolies were got rid of. Originally contracted between England and Turkey alone, this arrangement was soon accepted by all the Governments of Europe, even by Russia. As far as commerce went, the exclusiveness of Russian influence was thus broken through, while larger intercourse with Europe was secured to Turkey.

It was probably the fear of Mehemet Ali which induced the Porte to make this concession, for the Viceroy of Egypt, in 1838, had refused to pay his tribute to Turkey, and had taken steps to establish himself as an independent monarch. He also interfered with the administration of the holy cities, thus trenching upon the duties belonging to the Kaliph as Commander of the Faithful. In the spring of 1839 Mahmoud II. determined upon active measures against his rebellious Pasha. He collected a powerful army on the Euphrates, while the Egyptians under Ibrahim Pasha son of Mehemet occupied Syria, having their headquarters at Aleppo. It was the general feeling among European statesmen that if the question was brought to the trial of battle the Egyptians would undoubtedly be victorious; Constantinople would be in danger, the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi would come into force, the Russians would be summoned to protect the Porte, while the fleets of France and England would be excluded from the Dardanelles. It was of equal importance, both to France and England, that such a complete triumph of Russian influence should be avoided; and Palmerston at once put himself into communication with M. Molé, the French Prime Minister, for the purpose of concerting measures to prevent it. As early as June 1838 Palmerston had suggested the necessity of a common action with France, a view which in the course of a month appears to have widened into an idea of the

Difficulties
between
Turkey and
Egypt.

Danger to
Europe from
Turkish defeat.

joint action of the five great European powers. Could such a co-operation be secured, the separate importance of Russia would be destroyed, and that country would be bound to join in what has subsequently been called the European Concert. It was hoped that such action might prevent war. It did not do so. In June 1839 Mahmoud declared war against the Egyptians, and on the 24th of that month the battle of Nezib was fought and the Turks wholly defeated. Within a few days Mahmoud, a man of considerable ability and strength, died, and was succeeded by his young son, Abdul Medjid. The new Sultan found himself on his accession in a very dangerous situation, rendered worse by the defection, on the 13th of July, of the whole of his fleet, which passed over to the Egyptian Viceroy. The negotiations between the courts of Europe had made considerable advance; for, on the 27th of July, the Ambassadors of the five Powers in Constantinople, acting apparently upon orders from home, presented a collective note declaring that the five Powers had agreed to discuss together and settle the Eastern Question; and they accordingly invited the Divan to suspend a definitive arrangement which it was on the point of making, and to confide in the mediating Powers. Even before this, on the 17th of July, Marshal Soult, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, had issued a circular to the French Ambassadors abroad, stating that a union of Powers was necessary, and Palmerston on the part of England, and Metternich on the part of Austria, had given their unqualified adhesion to this project of united action.

Up to this point the views of France and England were sufficiently similar. To neither was it advantageous that Russia should be exclusive master in Turkish affairs. But from the first M. Molé had made no secret of a possible difference of opinion which might easily arise between the two countries. As long as the efforts of Europe were directed to prevent war, to allow Turkey and Egypt to remain in their existing position, France was well satisfied. But the traditional policy of that country was to maintain, as far as possible, its influence in Egypt. There was a constant uneasy jealousy of England on that point, arising from the supposition that England desired, either by means of influence or by means of actual possession, to secure Egypt as the direct road to India. When therefore war broke out, and the question was no longer the maintenance of the existing position, but the settlement of the terms of peace between Egypt and Turkey, the Governments of France and England began to have different views. To Palmerston it

Success of
Palmerston's
negotiations.

Difference of
opinion
between France
and England.

appeared that armed interference, for the purpose of re-establishing the integrity of the Turkish Empire as a counterpoise to Russia, was necessary. The French Minister, while allowing that the maintenance of some Mohammedan Power was desirable, thought it better that that Power should be Egypt in the hands of Mehemet Ali, whose ability and success he probably overrated. Consequently at the Conference, France persistently—whether under the government of Soult or of his successor, Thiers—advocated the cause of Mehemet Ali, and urged that he should be established in an hereditary kingdom, including Syria as well as Egypt. The Russian ambassador attended the Conference, and was very reasonable in his demands. His first suggestion was indeed inadmissible. Acknowledging that immediate action was desirable, he proposed that England should confine itself to the Levant, leaving to Russia the protection of Constantinople and the Dardanelles. In accepting Palmerston's view in preference to that of France, the Russian Government no doubt wished to foment the differences which were arising between the two western countries. It was, as has been seen, their junction which had thwarted in the west of Europe the objects of the Holy Alliance. By suggesting the division of work just mentioned, it hoped at the same time to render the Powers of Europe practically partners in the great Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, by leading them to give their consent to the sole action of Russia. But Palmerston saw through this design, and insisted that if Russian ships entered the Sea of Marmora the ships of other countries should do so likewise. These terms the Russians accepted, and the concert of four of the Powers was therefore perfect. France, meanwhile, was not only trying to press the claims of Egypt in the Conference, but was establishing independent negotiations with Mehemet. Weary of waiting, Palmerston at length, having heard of this action on the part of France, and having freed his connection with Russia from danger, suddenly contracted on the 15th July 1840 a Convention with the three other Powers for armed interference in the Eastern Question, thus leaving France isolated and without allies. Anger in France had been long simmering; the news of the Convention produced an ebullition of fury. Though Louis Philippe was at heart thoroughly peaceful, he was obliged to give some show of yielding to the wishes of his ministers, and the country rang with preparations for war.

The ultimatum of the Powers was despatched to Mehemet Ali. He was offered the Pashalic of Egypt and of Acre for life; but if the

Palmerston's
Convention of
July 1840.

terms were not accepted within ten days he was to be offered Egypt alone. If he still persisted the Powers would use force. Trusting no doubt that France would help him, he refused the ultimatum, and tried direct negotiations with the Porte. That court went beyond the intentions of the Powers; it not only refused to negotiate, but declared the deposition of the Pasha. French anger rose still higher at this. Palmerston was able to clear himself of all complicity in the action of Turkey, but in continuation of his former policy, at the expiration of the given time at once proceeded to war. Admiral Stopford, in command of the English ships and some

**Defeat of
Egypt.
Nov. 1840.**

Austrian frigates (an emblem of union with Austria rather than a real support), bombarded Beyrout, and drove out the Egyptian troops. Commodore Napier stormed Sidon, landed forces, and defeated Ibrahim Pasha in the mountains of Lebanon. The strength of the Viceroy, on which France had relied, was evidently crumbling away. A final blow was given to it when the fortress of St. Jean d'Acre—held to be impregnable, and which indeed Napoleon himself had been unable to take—was captured by the British fleet after a bombardment of three hours. Single-handed, and without the aid of Russia, whose fleet had remained quiescent at Sebastopol, England had proved sufficient to save Turkey and destroy the overrated power of Egypt.

The policy of Palmerston had been open to assault on all sides. He was charged with undue meddling, and with risking with very inadequate means the chances of war. His own colleagues, disciples of Fox, were indignant at anything which would slacken the friendship with France, which was a part of their political creed. It was urged that he was recklessly driving England not only to quarrel but actually to fight with France. But the Foreign Secretary had gifts which carried him successfully through the difficult time; he knew his own mind thoroughly; he entirely disbelieved (and as it proved correctly) in the strength of Egypt; he was characterised by a rare pertinacity and courage. It remained to be seen how far he had been correct in his estimation of the warlike energy of France. Here again his forecast proved true. Again and again in his despatches he had declared his certainty that the French King would insist upon peace; and when the critical time arrived, when, after the fall of Acre, Thiers full of warlike fury attempted to drag Louis Philippe with him, and called for the completion of the armament and the equipment of a large fleet, it appeared that Palmerston had not trusted in vain to the King. Louis Philippe refused to listen

**Triumph of
Palmerston.**

to his ministers' demands, and the government of Thiers fell. His place was taken by Guizot, who entered upon office pledged to maintain peace, and able to oppose to the assaults of his enemies the unanswerable argument that, the fall of Mehemet Ali being already an accomplished fact, true wisdom lay in making the best of existing circumstances. It was subsequently proved that Palmerston was as correct in his mistrust of the late French Ministry as in his estimate of the French King. A discussion which followed the fall of Thiers disclosed the intention of that minister to seize the Balearic Islands, and, had he not been forestalled by the fall of Acre, to support the Egyptian Viceroy against England. The fall of Acre had taken place in November; little more than a month elapsed before Mehemet Ali was completely reduced to submission. On January 1, 1841, he restored the Turkish fleet to the Sultan, and in the following month he received a firman of investiture, securing to him the government of Egypt upon certain conditions implying his dependence on the Porte. A triumphant close was put to the diplomacy of Palmerston by a Treaty in July 1841, by which the Dardanelles were closed to ships of war belonging to any of the five Powers, and Turkey was formally put under the general protection of Europe. The admission of France to this Treaty served as a means of reconciliation with that country, while Turkey was withdrawn from its dangerous dependence upon Russia alone.

But the difficulties in the east of Europe were by no means the only field of Palmerston's action. On December 8, 1840, he wrote to our Ambassador in Paris: "This day has brought us a flight of good news—Mehemet's submission, Dost Mohamed's defeat, and the occupation of Chusan." In the far East, as well as upon the shores of the Black Sea, the influence of Russia had to be checked. Slowly, but with certainty, the Czar had been extending his influence over Central Asia; our statesmen, both at home and in India, began to dread the time when his advance might threaten our Indian Empire. According to its usual habit, it was by influence rather than by force that the Russian Government was intent upon making its way; and as in Turkey, so in Persia, its agents were engaged in a diplomatic battle with their English rivals. The Shah of Persia had been placed on his throne by English aid; English officers were employed in drilling his army. But, in spite of this, the greatness of Russia and its near neighbourhood led the Shah to prefer her alliance to that of England; and the Russian envoy was able so to excite and direct this ambition as to carry on the designs

**Danger of
Russian
advance in
Asia.**

of his own country by means of Persian arms. The English dominion had not yet passed the Sutlej. The Punjab still owned the sway of Runjeet Singh, the founder of the Sikh Empire, and a firm friend of England. But the interposition of this power was not regarded as a sufficient safeguard to British India; it was supposed that Afghanistan, the mountainous country lying between the Punjab and Persia, was the really efficient obstacle in the way of Russian advance; and it became a matter of paramount policy to secure the English position there. The country at this time was broken into three principalities, the most important of which was that of Cabul, owning the sovereignty of Dost Mohamed. Under the dynasty of the Suddozyes it had been a united empire, which by its threatening power had caused some alarm to the English. At that time, under the rule of Zemaun Shah, it had reached from Herat to Cashmere, and included a portion of Sindh below the mountains. But a domestic revolution had removed this dynasty. Zemaun Shah and his brother, Shah Soojah, had fled and taken refuge with the English. Cashmere and Peshawur had fallen to the Sikhs; the Ameers of Sindh had asserted their independence; and the family of the Barrukzyes—of which Futteh Khan was the founder, and his brother, Dost Mohamed, the chief representative—ruled what remained of the empire in the two principalities of Cabul and Candahar, while the city and district of Herat still remained in the hands of a Suddozye prince of the name of Kamran.

It was towards this broken sovereignty that the eyes both of Russia and of England were directed, and it was without much difficulty that Simonich, the Russian envoy, persuaded the Persian Shah to advance against Herat. Herat commands the only pass through which a fully equipped army can well advance into India from the north-west; there are no important obstacles between it and Candahar, from whence through Quetta and the Bolan Pass a force may reach the plains of the Indus. It seemed necessary to the English to preserve Herat. Yet, as it was in the hands of a Suddozye prince, it appeared likely that Dost Mohamed of Cabul, and his brothers of Candahar, might be easily persuaded to join a Persian assault upon this last remnant of the hostile dynasty. To prevent the realisation of this possibility, and to save Herat, was the first object of the English Government in India. And for this purpose Captain Burnes was sent upon an embassy—ostensibly commercial, but really of a political character—to the Court of Dost Mohamed. At first the Ameer, a man of many high and noble quali-

Herat besieged
by Russia and
Persia.

ties, showed every wish to continue close friends with the English; while receiving Burnes with much cordiality, he kept a Russian agent who had appeared in his country at arm's-length. But he demanded something in exchange for his friendship. The restoration of Peshawur by the Sikhs would have satisfied him, while his brothers of Candahar might have been won over by a promise of pecuniary aid. But Burnes was not authorised to give anything. All the advantage was apparently to come to the English; and Dost Mohamed was asked to exclude all foreign agents and to admit an English resident, while receiving in exchange nothing but empty promises of friendship. It was not to be expected that so one-sided an arrangement could withstand the more tangible advantages freely promised by the Russian envoy. He was no longer excluded from the Court, and it became gradually evident that the influence of the English was on the wane. Meanwhile, however, the Persian assault upon Herat had been thwarted. Aided by the skill and bravery of Major Pottinger, an English officer, Kamran and his ministers made a long defence; and at length the formal withdrawal of the English envoy from the Court of the Shah, and the appearance of a small force in the Persian Gulf, induced the Persians to raise the siege, and Herat was saved.

But although the main object of English diplomacy had been thus obtained, Lord Auckland and his advisers—not satisfied with leaving things alone, and angered by the change of attitude perceptible in Dost Mohamed's conduct—determined that the safety of India required the establishment of a friendly or rather a dependent sovereign in Afghanistan, and saw in their pensioner the exiled Suddozye Prince, Shah Soojah, an instrument ready for their project. To approach Afghanistan it was necessary to secure the friendship of the Sikhs, who were, indeed, ready enough to join against their old enemies; and a threefold treaty was contracted between Runjeet Singh, the English, and Shah Soojah for the restoration of the banished house. The expedition—which according to the original intention was to have been carried out chiefly by means of troops in the pay of Shah Soojah and the Sikhs—rapidly grew into an English invasion of Afghanistan. A considerable force was gathered on the Sikh frontier from Bengal; a second army, under General Keane, was to come up from Kurrachee through Sindh. Both of these armies, and the troops of Shah Soojah, were to enter the highlands of Afghanistan by the Bolan Pass. As the Sikhs would not willingly allow the free passage

Failure of
Burnes's
Embassy
to Dost
Mohamed.

Expedition
to depose
Dost Mohamed.

of our troops through their country, an additional burden was laid upon the armies,—the independent Ameers of Sindh had to be coerced. At length, with much trouble from the difficulties of the country and the loss of the commissariat animals, the forces were all collected under the command of Keane beyond the passes. The want of food permitted of no delay; the army pushed on to Candahar. Shah Soojah was declared Monarch of the southern Principality. Thence the troops moved rapidly onwards towards the more important and difficult conquest of Cabul. Ghuznee, a fortress of great strength, lay in the way. In their hasty movements the English had left their battering train behind, but the gates of the fortress were blown in with gunpowder, and by a brilliant feat of arms the fortress was stormed. Nor did the English army encounter any important resistance subsequently. Dost Mohamed found his followers deserting him, and withdrew northwards into the mountains of the Hindoo Koosh. With all the splendour that could be collected, Shah Soojah was brought back to his throne in the Bala Hissar, the fortress Palace of Cabul.

Regardless of the wishes of a people, in the fond belief that there was no feeling of nationality among the Afghans, and forgetful of the religious horror likely to be excited by a king whose power rested upon infidel bayonets, the English had succeeded in placing their nominee on the throne. For the moment the policy seemed thoroughly successful. The English Ministry could feel that a fresh check had been placed upon its Russian rival, and no one dreamt of the terrible retribution that was in store for the unjust violence done to the feelings of a people. Yet even now, farsighted statesmen (such as the Duke of Wellington) were pointing out that the difficulty of England would only begin when the military operations ceased. Their success seemed complete, when, as a consequence of some operations in the mountainous country to the north, Dost Mohamed thought it prudent to surrender himself to the English envoy, Sir William Macnaghten, and to withdraw with his family to the English provinces of Hindostan. He was there well received and treated with liberality; for, as both the Governor-General and his chief adviser Macnaghten felt, he had not in fact in any way offended us, but had fallen a victim to our policy.

It was in the full belief that their policy in India had been crowned with permanent success that the Whig Ministers withdrew from office, leaving their successors to encounter the terrible results to

Apparent
success.

Dost Mohamed
draws to
India.
Nov. 12, 1840.

which it led. For while the English officials were blindly congratulating themselves upon the happy completion of their enterprise, to an observant eye signs of approaching difficulty were on all sides visible. When the character of the Afghan people is remembered, it must be seen that it could scarcely be otherwise. The mixed population was not only of different races, but was broken up, as highland countries frequently are, among various tribes with conflicting interests. The removal of the strong rule of the Barrukzyes opened a door for undefined hopes to many of the other families and tribes. The whole country was full of intrigues and of diplomatic bargaining, carried on by the English political agents with the various chiefs and leaders. But they soon found that the hopes excited by these negotiations were illusory. The allowances for which they had bargained were reduced, for the English envoy began to be disquieted at the vast expenses of the Government. They did not find that they derived any advantages from the establishment of the new puppet King, Soojah Dowlah; and every Mahomedan, even the very king himself, felt disgraced at the predominance of the English infidels. But as no actual insurrection broke out, Macnaghten, a man of sanguine temperament and anxious to believe what he wished, in spite of unmistakable warnings as to the real feeling of the people, clung with almost angry vehemence to the persuasion that all was going well, and that the new King had a real hold upon the people's affection. So completely had he deceived himself on this point, that he had decided to send back a portion of the English army, under General Sale, into Hindostan. He even intended to accompany it himself to enjoy the peaceful post of Governor of Bombay, with which his successful policy had been rewarded. His place was to be taken by Sir Alexander Burnes, whose view of the troubled condition of the country underlying the comparative calm of the surface was much truer than that of Macnaghten, but who, perhaps from that very fact, was far less popular among the chiefs. The army which was to remain at Candahar was under the command of General Nott, an able and decided if somewhat irascible man. But General Elphinstone, the commander of the troops at Cabul, was of quite a different stamp. He was much respected and liked for his honourable character and social qualities, but was advanced in years, a confirmed invalid, and wholly wanting in the vigour and decision which his critical position was likely to require.

False confidence
of the English
at Cabul.

The fool's paradise with which the English Envoy had surrounded

himself was rudely destroyed. He had persuaded himself that the frequently recurring disturbances, and especially the insurrection of the Ghilzyes between Cabul and Jellalabad, were mere local outbreaks. But in fact a great conspiracy was on foot in which the chiefs of nearly every important tribe in the country were implicated. On the evening of the 1st of November a meeting of the chiefs was held, and it was decided that an immediate attack should be made on the house of Sir Alexander Burnes. The following morning an angry crowd of assailants stormed the houses of Sir Alexander Burnes and Captain Johnson, murdering the inmates, and rifling the treasure-chests belonging to Soojah Dowlah's army. Soon the whole city was in wild insurrection. The evidence is irresistibly that a little decision and rapidity of action on the part of the military would have at once crushed the outbreak. But although the attack on Burnes's house was known, no troops were sent to his assistance. Indeed, that unbroken course of folly and mismanagement which marked the conduct of our military affairs throughout this crisis had already begun. Instead of occupying the fortress of the Bala Hissar, where the army would have been in comparative security, Elphinstone had placed his troops in cantonments far too extensive to be properly defended, surrounded by an entrenchment of the most insignificant character, commanded on almost all sides by higher ground. To complete the unfitness of the position, the commissariat supplies were not stored within the cantonments, but were placed in an isolated fort at some little distance. An ill-sustained and futile assault was made upon the town on the 3d of November, but from that time onwards the British troops lay with incomprehensible supineness awaiting their fate in their defenceless position. The commissariat fort soon fell into the hands of the enemy and rendered their situation still more deplorable. Some flashes of bravery now and then lighted up the sombre scene of helpless misfortune, and served to show that destruction might even yet have been averted by a little firmness. The energy of individual officers in securing food repaired to some extent the terrible loss of the commissariat fort.

But the commander had already begun to despair, and before many days had passed he was thinking of making terms with the enemy. Macnaghten had no course open to him under such circumstances but to adopt the suggestion of the general, and attempt as well as he could by bribes, cajolery, and intrigue, to divide the chiefs and secure a safe retreat for the English. Akbar Khan, the son of Dost Mohamed,

Outbreak of the
Insurrection.

Murder of Sir
A. Burnes.
Nov. 2, 1841.

though not present at the beginning of the insurrection, had arrived from the northern mountains, and at once asserted a pre-dominant influence in the insurgent councils. With him and with the other insurgent chiefs Macnaghten entered into an arrangement by which he promised to withdraw the English entirely from the country if a safe passage were secured for the army through the passes. But not unnaturally he felt bitterly the want of energy displayed by the military commanders, of whom he allowed himself to speak as "despicable cowards." It was only after many suggestions of a bolder and more worthy line of conduct that he had brought himself to treat; and the blow to his self-respect in the total and disgraceful annihilation of a line of policy of which he had been the chief author appears to have made him almost reckless. While ostensibly treating with the Barrukzye chiefs, he intrigued on all sides with the rival tribes. His double dealing was taken advantage of by Akbar Khan. He sent messengers to Macnaghten proposing that the English should make a separate treaty with himself and support him with their troops in an assault upon some of his rivals. The proposition was a mere trap, and the envoy fell into it. Ordering troops to be got ready, he hurried to a meeting with Akbar to complete the arrangement. There he found himself in the presence of the brother and relatives of the very men against whom he was plotting, and was seized and murdered by Akbar's own hand.

Still the General thought of nothing but surrender. The negotiations were entrusted to Major Pottinger. The terms of the chiefs gradually rose, and at length with much confusion the wretched army marched out of the cantonments, leaving behind nearly all the cannon and superfluous military stores. An Afghan escort to secure the safety of the troops on their perilous journey had been promised, but the promise was not kept. The horrors of the retreat form one of the darkest passages in English military history. In bitter cold and snow, which took all life out of the wretched Sepoys, without proper clothing or shelter, and hampered by a disorderly mass of thousands of camp-followers, the army entered the terrible defiles which lie between Cabul and Jellalabad. Whether Akbar Khan could, had he wished it, have restrained his fanatical followers is uncertain. As a fact the retiring crowd—it can scarcely be called an army—was a mere unresisting prey to the assaults of the mountaineers. Constant communication was kept up with Akbar; on the third day all the ladies and children with the married men were placed in his hands, and finally even the two generals gave themselves up as hostages, always in the hope that the remnant of the

Negotiations
for retreat.

Murder of
Macnaghten
Dec. 23.

Retreat from
Cabul.
Jan. 6, 1842.

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army might be allowed to escape. All humiliations were in vain. Of the whole retreating mass, consisting of 4,500 troops, and 12,000 camp followers, one single man survived to reach Jellalabad, on the 13th of January. He there found safety, for Sir Robert Sale had refused to obey the order to withdraw which Macnaghten had sent him at the beginning of the negotiations. The little garrison had re-established the fortifications and defended themselves against the enemy which had crowded round them. They thus still occupied an advanced position of incalculable value in view of the return of the English forces from Cabul. Similarly, at Candahar in the south, General Nott had kept a firm hold of his position. He too had disregarded the order sent him to withdraw, and in spite of the insurrection which was spreading all around him, and in spite of the failure of Brigadier England to relieve him, had resolutely maintained his ground.

It remained to the Supreme Government of India to decide to what use these advanced forces should be put, whether there should be a complete and instant withdrawal—a disastrous confession of the folly and impotence of the late attempt to establish English influence at Cabul—or a fresh expedition, not indeed with the intention of carrying out the former policy which was now condemned on all sides, but to vindicate the honour of the English arms, and to re-establish that prestige on which our position in the East so largely depended. The moment was particularly critical; a change of Ministry had taken place at home, and a change of governors at Calcutta. Lord Auckland had been succeeded by Lord Ellenborough. But before the arrival of the new governor it was upon Lord Auckland that the responsibility of acting still rested. Feeling that the new Ministry disapproved of the policy he had pursued, and of which he himself now repented, and honestly desirous to do nothing which might compromise the action of his successor, the Governor-General acted almost of necessity without decision or vigour. On the receipt of the news of the revolt and of the difficulties of the Cabul force, he began to think of nothing short of an entire withdrawal from Afghanistan. The terrible tidings of the massacre in the passes roused him for a moment, and induced him to write a general order which spoke of the necessity of chastisement and reconquest; but almost immediately after he seems to have fallen back to his old despairing view that the most that could be done was to bring off the garrisons and concentrate the force on the Indian side of the passes in the neighbourhood of Peshawur. The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Jasper Nicholls, went even further in his views with regard to the necessity of withdrawal. He had disliked the expedition

Conduct of the
garrisons of
Jellalabad and
Candahar.

Auckland's
Policy.

from the first, and trembled for the safety of our Indian Provinces if further denuded of soldiery. Neither of the chief authorities appears to have participated in the general feeling of the more active and experienced members of the Civil and Political Service, that our position in India was more likely to be jeopardised by a disastrous confession of weakness in Afghanistan than by anything else.

The eager efforts of the local administration, and the Governor-General's wish that an army of some strength should be collected at Peshawur, worked together at all events so far, that troops began to assemble in that neighbourhood, and that an able and steady officer, General George Pollock, was placed in command. It was not however till the 5th of February that the new general took over his command. Already, before that time, an inefficient and disastrous attempt had been made, under Brigadier Wild, to force the Khyber Pass; and it was to an army thoroughly dispirited, robbed of nearly half its numbers by sickness, and tied to Sikh allies on the verge of mutiny, that Pollock came. To move at once was out of the question. Eager as he must have been to push on to restore the honour of English arms, and to save the hard-pressed garrison which, under Sir Robert Sale, was making so gallant a resistance at Jellalabad, Pollock had firmness enough to resist all temptations and all pressure till he had restored the temper and health of his army, and received reinforcements sufficient to make its success tolerably certain. It was not till the beginning of April that he felt justified in moving.

Meanwhile, ever since the 15th of November 1841, Sir Robert Sale had been holding his own in Jellalabad. The history of the siege shows a succession of momentous decisions, an unbroken course of energetic and successful action. In the first place it was decided—and the propriety of this is, perhaps, alone open to question—that it was impossible to advance with success to the rescue of the Cabul troops. It was then determined to occupy the whole of the town, and not the citadel only, though the walls were almost useless, and built in among houses and enclosures affording abundance of shelter to an attacking force. The first work was to clear and remodel the defences. The work was almost completed when a terrible earthquake demolished a large portion of it, and it had to be done all over again. More than a hundred shocks are said to have been felt during the winter. But after the position had been secured, there arose the still more difficult question as to whether the orders received from Macnaghten to withdraw were to be obeyed or not. After long and stormy discussions, and almost in spite of the general's own wishes, the bolder counsel prevailed, and on the 26th of January the great

Pollock at
Peshawur.
Feb. 1842.

Sale in
Jellalabad.

decision was arrived at that the town should be held. The anarchy prevailing in Cabul, the murder of Shah Soojah (April 5), and the political necessities of the time no doubt somewhat slackened the efforts of Akbar against the town. The garrison became more and more confident; successful skirmishes, sorties, and foraging expeditions kept up their spirits and supplied their commissariat; and when—as Pollock still delayed, and rumours were spread that his efforts were unsuccessful—in the beginning of April Akbar Khan came down upon the town in force, the garrison found itself strong enough to act without assistance, and to fight and win a pitched battle with its assailants. It was no beaten and starving remnant, but a well-supplied, victorious, and confident body of troops, that welcomed the arrival of General Pollock. By soldierly arrangements, by occupying the heights on either side, and thus turning the flank of any important opposition, he had forced his way through the dangerous passes, and on the 16th of April joined hands with Sale.

Difficulties of the same character as those which Sale had encountered had come upon Nott at Candahar. Around that town also the insurgents had swarmed. Nott also had thought of assisting the Cabul army, he had even despatched a force in November for its relief under Colonel Maclaren. But probably, even when despatching it, he was conscious that it could be of no use; the advance was not very warmly pressed, and Maclaren returned. General Nott too had received orders to withdraw and had refused to comply. In January he had won a victory over the insurgents; in March he had led out his army again, leaving as he believed the city in safety behind him; but the enemy slipped round his flank, and a desperate attack was made upon the Herat gate of the city. It was however unsuccessful, and Nott on his return was able thoroughly to secure his position. To the Candahar garrison too reinforcements had been sent from Quetta only to be beaten back, while the capture of Ghuznee (March 6), the surrender of the officers, and the general massacre of nearly the whole of the British troops which had garrisoned the place, formed a sort of counterpart to the horrors of the retreat from Cabul.

It still remained to be decided by the new Governor-General whether the garrisons of Candahar and Jellalabad, now that their safety was secured, were to be merely withdrawn from Afghanistan or to be previously used in some forward movement. Lord Ellenborough had come out with peaceful intentions. Left to himself he would probably have merely withdrawn the troops, but the feeling of the English in India, roused especially by the recollection that many officers and ladies were still

Nott at
Candahar.

The two
garrisons
ordered to
retire through
Cabul.

captives in the hands of Akbar Khan, was too strong for him. He hit upon the somewhat strange plan of adhering to his determination to withdraw the troops, but instructing them to retire through Cabul. He also thought it wise to direct General Nott on his approach to Ghuznee to take from the reputed tomb of Sultan Mahmoud the gates of Somnauth, or what were traditionally so considered, which that conqueror had carried off from India about the year 1020, and to bring them back with him as a trophy. These arrangements were followed out, and in the earlier part of August General Nott left Candahar. About a week later Pollock, having with some difficulty opened correspondence with Candahar, and being assured of the co-operation of the army there, set out from Jellalabad. The two armies were thus at once moving upon Cabul. Both of them encountered resistance. On the south-west Ghuznee was indeed evacuated in the night; but between that town and Cabul the Pass of Mydan was occupied, and bravely defended by two of the Afghan chiefs; and the resistance would probably have been even more severe had not news been brought that Pollock on the other side had won a great victory over Akbar at Tezeen. The difficulties of the approach to Cabul from the east are very great. The gorges among the hills which have to be passed are in some places not more than from six to ten feet broad. The road, just beyond the valley of Tezeen, crosses seven ridges known as the Huft Cotal, to the left of the pass. In the valley of Tezeen, before entering upon this passage, Akbar Khan having occupied the heights gave battle to the English. The greater part of the day the battle continued; but at length the Huft Cotal was surmounted, and the enemy entirely routed. The success was decisive; and when the Candahar troops arrived at Cabul on the 17th, they found Pollock already encamped upon the race-course. A part of the long time during which Pollock had been obliged to delay at Jellalabad had been employed in negotiations for the release of the prisoners, those ladies and officers who had been surrendered upon the retreat from Cabul. They had been on the whole well treated. Moved about from fort to fort, they had lately been residing with some comfort in the immediate neighbourhood of Cabul. The negotiations for their liberation had however failed; and before Akbar had advanced to Tezeen he had hurried them away to the mountain district of Bamean, with the intention of placing them for security among the Usbegs of the Afghan frontier. To rescue them was the first duty of the English upon their success. Sir Richmond Shakespear, with a detachment of irregular horse, was despatched at

Successful
arrival at
Cabul.
Sep. 15 and 17,
1842.

Rescue of the
prisoners.
Sep. 17.

once to Bamean, followed by a more regularly organised detachment in support, the command of which was given to Sir Robert Sale, whose wife was among the prisoners. Shakespear had not to go to Bamean. The prisoners had effected their own escape, and met him on his way. They had succeeded in purchasing the friendship of the leader of their escort, who with his followers deserted the national cause, and was accompanying them to Cabul when Shakespear met them.

It remained for the English generals, according to the instructions from the Governor-General, to leave some mark of their power in Afghanistan. A force under M'Caskill was pushed up northwards, where there seemed a chance of some further opposition. The town of Istaliff was taken and partly destroyed, and a good deal of destruction wrought, especially among the fruit-trees. In Cabul itself the great bazaar, the chief architectural monument of the place, was blown up with gunpowder, and—though without sanction from the generals—the soldiery, naturally excited by the signs of the late terrible catastrophe which they frequently encountered, did much damage to the city. Upon the whole however considering the provocation the amount of destruction whether in Cabul itself or upon the march was not very great. According to the policy which Lord Ellenborough

Withdrawal of
the English.
Oct. 11.

Return of Dost
Mahomed to
Cabul.
Feb. 1843

was adopting the armies had now only to withdraw, and a short time saw them clear of the dangerous passes and safely collected in the plains below. The policy of the late governor-general was acknowledged to have been wholly wrong; Afghanistan was left to itself, free to choose its own governor, and as a necessary consequence Dost Mahomed was liberated from India, and before long found means to seat himself afresh upon the throne of Cabul. Lord Ellenborough, who seems to have had a turn for theatrical ceremonies, received the returning armies at a splendid meeting at Ferozepore, and issued a bombastic address, entrusting the gates of Somnauth to the chiefs of Sirhind in what the Duke of Wellington stigmatised as a "song of triumph." "Brothers and friends," he said, "the insult of eight hundred years is at length avenged, the gates of the temple of Somnauth, so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory, the proof of your superiority in arms over the nations beyond the Indus." He did not see that in speaking of his friends and brothers he was addressing Mahomedans and Hindoos alike; that to the Mahomedans the restoration of the gates was an open insult, and that the polluted trophies of a Mahomedan temple were of little or no value to the Hindoos. The address served only to cover the Governor-General

with ridicule. Yet on the whole the right thing had been done, and the attempt at direct influence in Afghanistan, which could scarcely lead to anything except either disaster or annexation, was given up. The sounder view that the cultivation of the friendship of the native rulers formed the surest means of preserving the difficult and mountainous territory as an intervening obstacle between the Russian and English empires was henceforward for many years accepted. At the same time the late military operations, though they had no doubt rendered the securing of that friendship a work of time, had vindicated the superiority of our arms.

The third point on which Lord Palmerston had congratulated himself was the capture of Chusan. Though the affairs of China can scarcely be reckoned as a part of his general policy, they were closely connected with that exaggerated view of the importance of English interests which is its chief characteristic. It may be an open question how far a nation has a right to close its doors against all strangers, and to deprive both itself and the world of the advantages of commercial intercourse. It is not perhaps to be expected that a great civilised nation will calmly put up with a self-complacent assertion of superiority on the part of a people whom it regards as half barbaric. Yet, in spite of every protest, in spite of every form of local and municipal opposition, to force a people to accept and purchase largely a noxious and poisonous drug, from the miserable effects of which the government is anxious to preserve its subjects, can scarcely be defended even by the plea of British interests. Yet such appears to have been the conduct of the English government in what is known as the opium war. Unfortunately in the course of the dispute the Chinese put themselves in the wrong. The insulting language and high-handed conduct of their officials afforded plausible ground for the prosecution of a quarrel in itself unjustifiable, and the original cause of dispute was hidden under the secondary questions which arose from it.

The consistent policy of China was one of isolation. Had it been possible it would have avoided even mercantile intercourse with the outside world; against the establishment of diplomatic relations with foreign powers it steadfastly set its face. It had found it impossible entirely to exclude commerce; and trade had sprung up chiefly in the hands of a body of foreign traders in Canton, known as the Hong merchants. Entrance to the city itself was forbidden, except to a few licensed traders occupying factories; it was in the estuary of the river that the foreign ships lay; the forts of the Bocca Tigris or Bogue guarded the approaches to the city. Up to 1834 the English share of

End of the
Afghan War.
Dec. 1842.

The opium war.

this restricted commerce had been in the hands of the East India Company, and side by side with the legitimate trade had arisen a considerable traffic in opium, the importation of which was forbidden by the Chinese Government. In the hands of a large and responsible corporation such as the East India Company, both the legitimate and illegitimate trade had been kept under reasonable management. But when the destruction of its monopoly induced the Company to withdraw altogether from the Chinese trade, and when, in the hands of individual speculators, opium smuggling largely increased, the English Government thought it necessary to appoint official superintendents to regulate the commerce, and if possible to put some check upon the contraband trade. That these superintendents were the agents of a foreign government was however sufficient to set the Chinese authorities against them, and they were subjected to treatment to which the representatives of a great power could scarcely submit. Arrangements for the admission of legitimate business, and for the exclusion or regulation of illicit trade became impossible. The Chinese adopted therefore the summary method of entirely closing all trade with England. This produced the first collision between the nations. Lord Napier, the superintendent, summoned a naval force to his aid, silenced the Bogue forts, and compelled the government of Canton to consent to the re-establishment of commercial relations. For several years matters continued in a dangerous and unsettled state. The Chinese, insisting that the direction of the English trade should be entrusted to a superintendent who should not be a Government official, encountered the equally firm determination of the English Government to be recognised, and to refuse any negotiations except through their proper representatives. Almost as a matter of course things went from bad to worse. The opium smuggling increased; it began to extend along the coast of China; it found its way up the Canton river itself. The English Government with culpable negligence took no notice of the rising difficulties, till in July 1838 it became necessary again to send two English ships to the river, and again to demand satisfaction from the Canton mandarins.

At length the Chinese Government, alarmed perhaps by the drain of silver which the opium trade was creating, and not unnaturally much irritated at the unrestrained infraction of their revenue laws, determined upon strong measures. A Chinese commissioner of the name of Lin was appointed, and armed with full powers for the suppression of smuggling. He acted with vigour, and demanded that English traders should enter into a bond, pledging them under

Origin of the dispute.

Increase of opium smuggling.

penalty of forfeiture of goods and even of death that they would not henceforth import opium. He insisted by a show of force (to which Captain Elliott, the superintendent, was obliged for the time to yield) upon the surrender and destruction of all the opium, amounting to upwards of 20,000 chests, at that time on board the ships in the river. But Captain Elliot seems to have arrived at the conclusion that it was inconsistent with the position of England and destructive of the entire trade with China to put up with such violent treatment. He summoned to his aid a considerable fleet from India. Before its arrival fresh causes of dispute had arisen. A Chinese fleet had been roughly handled by two English frigates; an English vessel called "The Black Joke" had been taken and destroyed by Chinese pirates; a Chinaman had been murdered in a scuffle at Macao; the murderer, when demanded by the Chinese authorities, had been refused; and just as the English squadron began to arrive a formidable effort was made to burn all the English shipping in the river by means of fire-ships. The countries had practically drifted into war. Commodore Brewer upon his arrival declared Canton in a state of blockade, but thinking that the power of England would be more effectually displayed by larger operations passed northward and inflicted a heavy blow upon the self-sufficiency of the Chinese by capturing and occupying a portion of their empire, the island of Chusan. The victorious fleet then proceeded to the mouth of the Pekin river in order to insist upon direct negotiations with the Chinese court. The negotiations were however on the 10th of September transferred to Canton, and here, withdrawn from the immediate pressure of the English fleet, the Chinese Commissioners interposed much delay. It was only under threat of renewed hostilities on the part of Commodore Brewer that a preliminary arrangement was arrived at on the 20th of January.

The treaty was in itself satisfactory enough, but as it had been contracted without the actual application of force the Chinese were able to regard it as an act of concession on their part; and the English government, knowing the self-asserting character of the people with whom they had to deal, saw a danger of renewed insults and renewed hostility. They therefore disallowed the treaty and sent out Sir Henry Pottinger to supersede Elliot as plenipotentiary. The dissatisfaction of the English Ministry was justified. The Chinese appear to have had no intention of fulfilling their engagements. A month had scarcely elapsed since the signature of the treaty, when an assault upon an English boat rendered it necessary to destroy the Bogue forts, and to bring the fleet up to the very walls

Outbreak of the war.

Capture of Chusan. July 5, 1840.

Preliminary treaty. Jan. 1841.

of Canton. Further action was for a while delayed till full proof could be obtained as to the hostile disposition of the Chinese. But when it was ascertained that the authorities of Peking had disowned the action of their plenipotentiaries, when a violent and insulting edict stigmatising the English as dogs and sheep had been issued, and when the continued arrival of fresh troops made it evident that war was intended, the general, Sir Hugh Gough, delayed no longer. He landed a force and attacked the walls of the city. Successful in his preliminary operations, he had ordered a final assault to be made

Attack on
Canton.
Aug. 1841.

within an hour, when the crisis was again averted by offers of negotiation. It was in the midst of this unsatisfactory state of things—constantly recurring war not pushed to a conclusion and preliminary negotiations the ratification of which was refused—that Sir Henry Pottinger arrived on the 9th of August.

The change of Ministry which occurred at this time did not alter the course pursued by England. Although the primary object of Pottinger's mission was to procure an advantageous treaty, it was evident that to reach this end a further display of force would be required. As on the previous occasion, so now it was considered that more effect would be produced by extending the operations of the fleet along the coast than by confining them to the Canton river. The forces passing northward undertook a series of enterprises against the large fortified towns upon the sea or upon the mouths of the rivers. At the end of August Amoy was taken. In September Chusan, which had been evacuated, again fell into the hands of the English, as well as the important cities of Chin-Hi and Ningpo. Although at times the Chinese proved capable of vigorous resistance, and in the spring of 1842 attempted to recapture some of the towns they had lost, they were thoroughly overmatched and defeated without difficulty. At length the great river Yang-Tze-Kiang was entered, the forts with which it was lined, and not less than 360 good pieces of ordnance, fell into the hands of the English. Shanghai and Chin-Kiang-Foo were taken, and an assault upon the great capital, Nankin, was imminent when a despatch from Sir Henry Pottinger stating that the Chinese Government had yielded and had consented to make peace checked

Treaty of
Nankin.
Aug. 1842.

further operations. The Treaty of Nankin was signed on the 26th of August. Five ports—Canton, Amoy, Foo-Chow-Foo, Ningpo, and Shanghai—were to be open to British trade, a large sum was to be paid for the opium destroyed in 1839, a second sum for debts due to British subjects by the Hong merchants, and a considerable war indemnity, in all 21,000,000 dollars. The island of Hong-Kong was to be ceded to England.



On one point the Chinese were firm; they positively refused to sanction the legalisation of the opium trade. They listened respectfully to the argument of the English negotiators, who urged that the legalisation of the trade would improve the revenue and avoid the difficulties which arose from smuggling. But while owning its truth, they declined as they said "to put a value upon riches and to slight men's lives." Opium therefore remained a contraband article, but the Chinese were afraid to put their laws against it in force. The illicit traffic revived and spread; it attracted the scum of the Chinese and of the European population of the sea-port towns, who found a refuge in the English island of Hong-Kong, which thus became a nest of pirates and smugglers. The opium traffic, then as now, gave rise to serious questions. The difficulty which has always beset the subject lies in the fact that the monopoly of opium is one of the chief sources of the Indian revenue. The poverty of the Indian people renders taxation a matter of great difficulty, and the Government has never seen its way to replace this questionable source of wealth. Indeed, plausible arguments have been alleged for its maintenance. It must be remembered that the Chinese are not the only people who would gladly use opium. The effect of the Government monopoly is to keep up the price and to limit the quantity of the drug produced. It is thus prevented from becoming an article of common use among our own Indian subjects. Again, its cultivation is so lucrative, that were the trade free the independent Indian governments would at once undertake its production, and an unregulated trade would arise, and the evil be increased.

If the moral question involved in the origin of the war is left out of sight, there is no doubt that its results were very advantageous. As Canton, the only port previously open to English trade, lies in a district which neither grows tea nor purchases woollen goods, the interchange between those articles had been difficult and expensive. The opening of the more northern ports allowed of a more direct exchange of the chief products of the respective countries to the manifest advantage of both. A source of constant dispute between the nations was also removed. It had always been felt to be impossible to surrender an Englishman, of whatever crime he may have been guilty, to be tried by the Chinese. A clause in the treaty now stipulated that culprits of either nation should be tried by their own law. Unfortunately, enough was left in the unsettled opium question, and in the animosity felt by the defeated Chinese, to render a subsequent renewal of hostilities only too probable.

Opium traffic
continued.

CHAPTER II.

SIR ROBERT PEEL'S MINISTRY, September 3, 1841.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Sir Robert Peel.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Lyndhurst.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Wharncliffe.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Duke of Buckingham.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Henry Goulburn.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir James Graham.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Stanley.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Aberdeen.
<i>Secretary at War,</i>	Sir Henry Hardinge.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Lord Haddington.
<i>President of the Board of Control,</i>	Lord Ellenborough.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Lord Ripon.
<i>(In the Cabinet, without office),</i>	Duke of Wellington.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Earl de Grey.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Sir Edward Sugden.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Lord Eliot.

The following changes took place subsequently :—

<i>Board of Control,</i>	{ Lord Fitzgerald, October 1841. Lord Ripon, May 1843.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	{ Duke of Buccleuch, January 1842. Lord Haddington, December 1845.
<i>Board of Trade,</i>	{ Mr. Gladstone, June 1843. Lord Dalhousie, February 1845.
<i>Secretary at War,</i>	{ Sir Thomas Fremantle, May 1844. Mr. Sidney Herbert, February 1845.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Duke of Buccleuch, December 1845.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Lord Ellenborough, December 1845.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Mr. Gladstone, December 1845.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Heytesbury, July 1844.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	{ Sir Thomas Fremantle, February 1845. Lord Lincoln, May 1846.

ON the 30th of August Lord Melbourne gave notice in the House of Lords that the Queen had accepted his resignation. The same notice was given in the Commons by Lord John Russell, who

claimed that his Ministry had begun and had concluded with large and important measures. "In pursuance of great objects we triumphed, and in pursuance of great objects we have fallen." By the 3d of September Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington had succeeded in forming a Ministry. The Duke himself took no office. Lord Lyndhurst became Lord Chancellor; Mr. Goulburn Chancellor of the Exchequer. The three Secretaries for Home, Foreign, and Colonial affairs were respectively Sir James Graham, Lord Aberdeen, and Lord Stanley. The presence in the Cabinet of the Duke of Buckingham, as Lord Privy Seal, was regarded at first as a proof that no important change was contemplated in the arrangement of the Corn Laws. Among the lesser members of the Government, without Cabinet rank, were the younger men destined subsequently to fill the most important places in English history—Gladstone was Vice-President of the Board of Trade; Sidney Herbert Secretary to the Admiralty; Lord Canning Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The difficulty which had caused the failure of the Conservative party to form a Ministry in 1839 was got over by tacit agreement. Before the dissolution, and probably in view of the coming change, on the advice of Lord Melbourne some ladies of the Conservative party had been admitted to the Household. The resignation of the Duchess of Sutherland, and the appointment of the Duchess of Buccleuch as Mistress of the Robes, was therefore regarded as a sufficient sacrifice to the exigencies of party.

After a short adjournment for the re-election of the members of Government, the House reassembled on the 16th of September. Nothing worthy of note was done, the few remaining weeks of the session being wasted in futile party discussions. The efforts of the Liberals to draw from Sir Robert Peel any distinct declaration of his policy, especially on the subject of the Corn Laws, proved vain. Although it had been the disturbed state of the country, the miserable poverty which was breeding discontent in all the manufacturing districts, and the diminution of the revenue traceable to the diminished consumption of the impoverished masses, which had driven the outgoing Ministry to bring in the financial measures on which they fell, Peel refused, and succeeded in making good his refusal, to be hurried into any disclosures as to his intended measures. The country had to be content with the general assertion that he still regarded the principle of the sliding scale as the only prudent one to adopt in the matter of corn; nor did he feel himself pledged to the exact maintenance of the present

The new
Ministry.
Sept. 3, 1841.

Peel refuses to
announce his
measures.
Sept. 1841.

system in all its details, although he was not averse to the removal of restraints on trade which produced but little revenue, and were merely irksome.

The new session of Parliament was opened on the 4th of February. Seldom has it met under circumstances of greater excitement, seldom has a Ministry begun its career amid greater difficulties. The full extent of the disasters in Afghanistan were indeed not yet known; but the news of the insurrection at Cabul, and the extreme dangers besetting our forces there, had just reached England. The war with China, successful though it was, had caused a constant drain upon the national resources, and there seemed every prospect of a continued deficit in the revenue. Yet this was but the lightest part of the difficulty which the Ministers were called upon to meet. The cause of the reaction which placed Peel at the head of his powerful majority was the desire of the constituencies for strong government. It was felt that however good the projects of the Liberals might have been, however able the individual members of their party, they had lacked the capacity to carry out their plans with vigour, had clung to office for two years after they had themselves confessed that they ought to leave it, and had failed in that prime duty of all governments, the establishment of order. It remained to be seen whether Peel and his followers, with their hands now strengthened by the large and willing support of the constituencies and with overwhelming majorities in both Houses, could satisfy the expectations they had raised; whether a less conciliatory policy would tend to the extinction of the constantly increasing discontent in Ireland; whether freedom from the dependence on the support of extreme Liberals would enable the Ministry to handle with greater freedom and success the disorders of Chartism; whether the financial wisdom with which Peel was credited would prove sufficient to devise some means of at once re-establishing the finances and restoring life to trade, of which the depression seemed the fruitful cause of the existing misery.

For the moment all interest was directed to this financial question. Wild hopes were indeed afloat that heroic remedies would be applied to cure the prevalent social disorder. Some talked of vast emigration schemes, some of the repeal of the new Poor Law, an idea which gained the more credit because a dislike of that law was common both to the Chartists and to one section of the Tories. But the deficiency in the revenue seemed to forbid the one attempt; the late appointment of a new Commissioner

Excitement at
opening of
Parliament of
Feb. 1842.

Difficulties to
be met.

Importance of
the Anti-Corn-
Law League.

under the Poor Law Act seemed to show that the Government had no idea of adopting the other. Indeed the more thinking men among the Reformers had come to the conclusion that the protective duties on corn, if not the sole cause, were at least chiefly answerable for the depression of trade, and that the prevailing misery could be largely traced to the enhanced price of bread which was the necessary effect of protection. The increasing strength of this opinion gave rise to the wide-spread agitation of which the Anti-Corn-Law League was the centre, and of which Mr. Villiers and Mr. Cobden were the chief spokesmen. It was this agitation with which the Government had chiefly to deal, for its prominence had gone far to weaken the danger of the Chartist movement. It was an agitation of political economists, of men who looked for means to promote the welfare of the people, not primarily either in their possession of political power or in changes of a social character, but in the liberty of trade—a liberty which as they believed would open fresh markets to our manufacturers, would thereby cause more employment, and at the same time lower the price of the prime necessities of life. The movement was thus regarded by the Chartists with great dislike, as being directed chiefly to the advantage of the capitalists, and to the maintenance of those principles of competition which they fancied were acting so injuriously upon themselves; while the more educated and wealthier classes, losing sympathy with the Chartist movement, turned their attention chiefly towards financial reform.

The opening of Parliament, when the well-preserved secret of the financial policy of the Government was to be declared, was therefore awaited with intense interest. The only indication of it as yet given to the public was the withdrawal of the Duke of Buckingham from the Ministry, which seemed at all events to foreshadow some diminution in the amount of the protection afforded to agriculture. On the 9th of February Sir Robert Peel announced that he would make his financial statement. Delegates of the Anti-Corn-Law League came in procession and crowded the lobby. From thence they were with some difficulty driven, and took up their position outside the House to watch the progress of the discussion. Sir Robert Peel began his explanation by enumerating causes other than the Corn Laws which appeared to him to explain the depression of trade and the poverty, the existence of which he could not deny. He also prudently guarded himself against the supposition that any legislation could immediately mitigate the prevailing distress. He

Anxiety to
hear Peel's
measures.

Peel's explana-
tion of the
distress.

minimised the effect of the high duties upon corn, and took up the position that England should be as far as possible self-supporting in the matter of food; that protection was therefore necessary for the agricultural interest; that the cheapness of bread, although in the abstract no doubt desirable, was of no great use unless the means of purchasing that cheap bread were forthcoming; that the removal of protection, by damaging the agricultural interest, would reduce the agricultural poor to the same state of impoverishment already existing among the manufacturing classes; that what was required was such an arrangement of protection as should secure a remunerative price, and by keeping corn at a fairly constant level shut the door to speculation and fraud. These advantages he confessed were not secured by the existing system, where the rapid diminution of duty attending rise in price, and not properly proportioned to it, had a constant tendency to induce traders to hold back their corn till the highest price was reached, and till they could reap at once both the advantages of the diminished duty and the high price. He therefore, some-
Peel's sliding-scale.
what arbitrarily, fixed upon something between 54s. and 58s. as the desirable remunerative price; beyond these limits he desired that the price should not vary. He proposed to begin with a duty of 20s. as long as corn was under 51s. the quarter. The duty was gradually to diminish, with occasional breaks in the sequence, till at 74s. it should be 1s., and after that altogether cease. Advantages were also to be given to colonial wheat; when English wheat was under 55s. colonial was to pay a duty of 5s., which was gradually to be reduced, till when wheat stood at 58s. the duty dropped to 1s. He disclaimed the idea of legislating for particular interests, but he said, "I certainly do consider that it is for the interest of all classes that we should be paying occasionally a small additional sum upon our domestic produce, in order that we may thereby establish a security and insurance against those calamities which would ensue if we became altogether or in great part dependent upon foreign corn for our supply."

Notice was given that three amendments would be moved in Committee. Lord John Russell, as the spokesman for
Three Amend-ments rejected.
the outgoing Ministry, upheld the advantages of a fixed duty; Mr. Villiers, representing the Anti-Corn-Law League, moved the total abolition of duty; while Mr. Christopher, on behalf of the landed gentry and protectionist section of the Ministerialists, moved for a higher and more stringent scale than that proposed. Four nights were passed in discussing Lord John Russell's resolutions, and they

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were defeated by a majority of 123. But although the House thus seemed to have arrived at a conclusion in favour of a sliding-scale, Mr. Villiers determined to proceed with his more trenchant motion, and for five days the question was again discussed in every possible light. It is plain that the great body of the Liberals had as yet only partially grasped the true bearings of the case. Indications were given that their eyes were being gradually opened, but they were too fully committed to the fixed duty which they had proposed during their tenure of office to feel themselves at liberty to support a measure of total abolition. Mr. Villiers' amendment was therefore rejected by a majority of more than 300. Nor did Mr. Christopher's interference on the opposite side fare better. His scale of duties was rejected by a majority almost identical in number. In the House of Lords the question followed the same course. There too Lord Melbourne's amendment in favour of a fixed duty was lost by 68, while resolutions condemnatory of all duties on foreign corn, produced by Lord Brougham, were lost by 87 votes to 6.

The frustration of the hopes of the Leaguers, which had been raised by the withdrawal of the Duke of Buckingham from the Cabinet, naturally excited a good deal of anger among them. Resolutions were passed in meetings in all the large towns condemnatory of Peel's proposal; in several places some violence was displayed, and the Prime Minister burnt in effigy. But on the whole, the feeling which the measure excited was that expressed by more than one speaker in both Houses, that the new scale was an improvement on the old, but that it left the main question as far from settlement as ever, and that sooner or later the entire removal of the duties was certain to come. It can scarcely be doubted that this was the Premier's own view. It was the impression of keen observers at the time that he was really speaking against his convictions when defending the sliding-scale; but it is characteristic of the whole of Peel's political career that while his mind and views were continually growing, and while he was accepting, both as right and necessary, changes he had hitherto opposed, he should permit the change to take place as slowly as possible, and should confine himself to measures which he believed it possible to carry without much opposition. The support of the landed interest was necessary to him; and he conceded just so much to his own growing convictions as he believed compatible with the retention of the approbation of that party.

The practical postponement of the great question of the Corn Laws

left him at liberty to act more in accordance with his real opinions, and to display his greatness as a finance Minister. The difficulty which he had to face was serious. There had been a persistent deficit for several years, amounting in the last five years to above seven millions and a half. Nor did there seem any chance of its diminishing; on the contrary, it appeared probable that, irrespective of increased outlay for the wars in China and Afghanistan, and for re-establishing of the finances of India, there would be in the coming year, closing in April 1843, a deficiency of about two millions and a half. The late Ministry had tided over their difficulty by the issue of Exchequer Bills, which were subsequently funded and added to the general debt. They had made, as has been mentioned, an honest effort in their last year of office by adding to the customs and excise and to the assessed taxes. But this addition had not produced the results expected. According to the old system there remained nothing but to revive taxes which had been abolished—taxes upon commodities or locomotion or light. Sir Robert Peel believed that further to tax the consumer was both wrong and impossible, and that some great and new resource of taxation must be employed. He therefore boldly proposed an income-tax of not more than 7d. in the pound, or 3 per cent., from which incomes of £150 and under were to be exempted. Land, houses, shares, funded property, the incomes of trade and professions, were all alike to be subjected to it. He considered that it would produce over £3,700,000. It was to be regarded as an exceptional tax, and therefore limited in duration. It might possibly, he said, require to be continued for five years; he suggested at present three years as its limit. Within that time it was to be hoped that a revival of trade would take place, accelerated by the other measures to be introduced. For hand-in-hand with this great general tax was to go a diminution of duties upon a great number of articles—a diminution which might at first lessen the revenue, but which would probably after a time increase it. On about 750 articles an abatement of duty of various amounts was recommended; on about 450 the duty was left untouched. With regard to the two important sources of revenue on which the frustrated budget of the last Ministry had largely depended, sugar and timber, he proposed in the case of sugar to retain the duty. Behind this there lay pretty obviously the idea that by means of it he could wring from Cuba and Brazil some securities in respect to the slave-trade. With regard to timber, the importance of which was very great, he proposed to admit Canadian timber at an almost nominal

Reception of
the measure in
the country.

Peel's own
opinion.

Peel's financial
measures.

The income-
tax.

Diminution of
duty on certain
imports.

duty of a shilling a load; but so far continued the system of protection that he retained a duty of 25s. upon foreign timber. The sum of these changes would increase the deficit to rather more than £3,700,000. The new tax would almost exactly cover this. A surplus or reserve for contingencies of about £500,000 was to be secured by laying a duty of a shilling a gallon upon spirits in Ireland, and taxing the exportation of coal in British vessels.

In spite of the evident marks of compromise in the Budget, especially in the part relating to the corn duties, it is impossible not to recognise that it was a far greater and more masterly way of dealing with the financial difficulty than that recommended by the late Government. It had however to undergo the regular course of party criticism from the Opposition, the leaders of which persisted in trumpeting the advantages of their own scheme. But apart from this, there were certain objections of a more genuine character which might be urged. Perhaps the reception given to the plan by Lord Brougham in the Upper House most clearly expresses the mingled acceptance and disapproval with which the scheme was regarded by many thinking men. It had long been a sort of fixed principle that indirect taxation, because it was less obvious in its incidence, was the more prudent form to adopt. Many of the more thorough reformers and economists had indeed recognised that direct taxation had its advantages; that it was better, for the morality of the people, that they should be appealed to openly for the maintenance of the State to which they belonged; and that the irksomeness which attended it was itself a powerful check upon its frequent use, and consequently conducive to economy. But the accepted view was that recourse should be had to so powerful an instrument of taxation as an income-tax only at critical times, and amid the expenses of war. Lord Brougham recognised that critical times might exist in peace as well as in war, and that the present, when all other means of filling the deficit appeared to have been tried in vain, was such a time. But he wished to put on record, and moved resolutions for that purpose, that the tax was only an exceptional tax, and open to grave objections. It was inquisitorial; left somewhat to the taxpayer himself to assess, it gave an opening to fraud; levied upon professional and mercantile profits, as well as realised property and capital, it pressed unduly upon the worker; and, capable of indefinite extension and repetition, it afforded too ready an instrument of taxation to be lightly entrusted to the hands of any government. Still Lord Brougham was willing to accept it, moving

Objections to the Budget.

Brougham's speech.

however that it should be arranged so as to fall differently upon realised capital and upon earnings. Any idea of a graduated tax—that is, of a tax proportionately heavier upon large fortunes than upon small—he stoutly repudiated. His resolutions were not carried. It was indeed generally acknowledged that the effort to produce minute fairness was a vain one. The income-tax has since become an integral part of our system of taxation, but the objections urged against it are still felt to be true, and its defects are submitted to only because they appear incurable, and because in the growth of economic thought direct taxation has met with very general approval. The discussion upon the resolutions with regard to the income-tax and the Bill founded upon them was long and full. The opposition, chiefly based upon the connection of the income-tax with the retention of the sliding-scale, was carried to a somewhat violent extreme by the members of the Anti-Corn-Law League. Conduct almost factious was shown in the House, and a tendency to what is now spoken of as obstruction. Again and again the adjournment of the House was moved merely for the purpose of delaying the Bill, a manoeuvre which was so far successful that the decision of the House was deferred till after the Easter recess; but then, although amendments were moved for the purpose of removing some of the recognised objections to the measure, it passed through all its stages with considerable rapidity and on the 21st of June was read for the third time in the House of Lords and passed by a majority of 71.

The 13th of May had seen the passing of the Income-tax Bill in the Lower House. The alterations in the tariff which ^{Alterations in the tariff.} which went hand in hand with it were then brought under notice. It was obvious that the reductions contemplated touched very many interests, removing as they did protective duties from a large number of articles. As was to be expected, there was much argument upon nearly every item. It is obvious also that the only principles on which the reductions could be justified were the exact principles of free-trade; that is to say, that the interests of the consumer were considered and not the interests of the producer. The inconsistency of introducing a tariff arranged upon these principles, while still retaining the protective duty upon corn, was too glaring to escape notice. For it seemed impossible to attribute to any other cause than the desire to secure the support of the landed interest the determination to maintain the price of the most necessary article of food, while the duty upon other articles of much less importance was lessened with the avowed object of producing a cheaper

supply. The feeling that the Budget was largely influenced by party considerations, and by the necessity of managing the great class interests, was strengthened by the refusal of Government to lessen the sugar duties. An argument for their retention was found in the supposed justice of assisting the planter who had been forbidden the use of slaves, and in the moral duty of discouraging a slave-grown product. It was calculated that the people of England had, during the last year, on account of the differential duties, paid nearly £4,000,000 more than was necessary for the sugar they had consumed. As the greater part of this large sum had passed into the pockets of the planters, the sacrifice demanded appeared so high that it was difficult not to believe that a wish to cultivate the support of the powerful West India influence had something to do with the determination of Government. Peel was however quite strong enough to pass all his financial measures by a considerable majority.

But it was not the inconsistency of the Budget so much as the deplorable condition of the working classes which gave strength to the arguments of the Anti-Corn-Law League. The misery of the people and the depression of trade were indeed obvious, but the cause was open to much question. As is usual in such a case, every conceivable cause was alleged as the principal one and found its partisans. To Peel and his friends it was the increase of machinery and the Whig wars in India and China. To Lord Stanhope, and with him some of the older Tories, it was the introduction of the New Poor Law. To the Protectionists it was the commercial treaties and the reciprocity system of Huskisson. To the Malthusians it was the increase of the population. To one form of rural economists it was the prevalence of large farms; to another the bad methods of cultivation. No doubt some, or perhaps all, of these influences were at work. But through it all one thing seemed pretty clear, that the removal of the restrictions upon the trade in corn could not but have a beneficial effect. It would supply the workman with cheaper food; and, inasmuch as corn imported would of necessity be largely paid for by English productions, it would open fresh markets for English manufacture. The same process, it was therefore urged, would both feed the workman more cheaply, and, by increasing the business of the manufacturers, enable them to employ more labour and supply the workman with the means of purchasing his cheapened food. So strong did opinion become on this point that the efforts of those who desired that something should be done to alleviate the distress were

Misery of the working classes.

Causes, and remedies proposed.

concentrated upon this measure, almost to the exclusion of all others, and in the parliamentary warfare of the day any movement in behalf of the suffering people was sure, before it ended, to assume the form of an attack upon the Corn Laws.

With the people themselves this was by no means the case. Then as always the indirect and secondary action of economic laws was less apparent and appealed less clearly to the popular mind than more direct measures of relief. And those measures the poorer classes believed to be obtainable if only political power was in their own hands. Once in command of spokesmen in the House of Commons—delegates immediately and frequently answerable to themselves, there was no amount of social legislation which did not seem within their reach. It was upon this idea that the Charter was based. In anger at the interference with their objects caused by the Anti-Corn-Law movement, the Chartists refused even to make use of it. It was in their eyes a middle-class movement, a means of putting money into the pockets of the capitalists. They determined to act without regard to the middle-class, and before the close of the session they made their grievances thoroughly known by presenting a petition to the legislature, and by demanding that they should be heard at the bar of the House. The petition was of unparalleled magnitude; it purported to be signed by 3,000,000 of names, and though some were probably fictitious or duplicate signatures, Thomas Duncombe, the member for Finsbury, declared himself ready to prove that 1,500,000 families were represented in the petition. Its presentation was a curious sight. Carried by 16 men, and followed by a long procession, it proved too large to get in at the door. It was hastily torn to pieces, and the fragments brought in each by two or three men were placed in a pile against the table of the House, which it considerably overtopped. Its contents exhibited the real feelings which were actuating the poor. Besides its immediate object—the five points of the Charter already mentioned, which were political in character—it complained bitterly of the national debt. The people, it urged, were overtaxed to pay the interest of an enormous loan, lavished upon useless and wicked wars, and raised by men who were not real representatives of the people. It then proceeded “respectfully to call attention to the existing monopolies, of the suffrage, of paper money, of machinery, of land, of the public press, of religion, and of the means of travelling and transit—all arising from class legislation.” It is impossible to mistake the meaning of this. When class legislation, as the existing

Opposition of the Chartists to the Corn-Law League.

The Chartist Petition presented. May 2, 1842.

method was called, should be abolished by the adoption of the Charter, the whole form of society was to be changed in the interest of the working classes. A national bankruptcy was to be followed by the destruction of the church, and confiscation, or at least redistribution of capital, whether invested in banks, machinery, or railways. It was not to be expected that Parliament should entertain such a petition. Even Mr. Roebuck, who supported the people's claim to be heard at the bar, was content to urge, what was indeed acknowledged on all sides, the miserable plight of the working class, while admitting that the petition itself was drawn up "by a fierce, malignant, and cowardly demagogue." A majority of 238 declared that the petitioners should not be heard.

But though so sweeping a social reform as that implied in the Chartist petition was at once refused a hearing, it must not be supposed that social legislation was entirely neglected. The increased susceptibility of the national conscience is in fact one of the most striking characteristics of the period which followed the great war; and the passing of the Reform Bill had allowed social questions to become even more prominent than before. The entire ignorance of that small section of society which before that Bill had ruled the country as to the condition of their poorer fellow-subjects had been gradually broken down. The inquiries for sanitary purposes rendered necessary by the cholera in 1832 had thrown much light upon the squalor of the life in the large towns; and the Factory Acts, with the reports which accompanied them, had made public the sufferings which attended the large employment of machinery; and now the voice of the people themselves, speaking in the disorders of Chartism, had still further enforced the lesson. It was almost by acclamation that Lord Ashley's Bill for the improvement of the condition of women and children in mines and collieries was passed.

Awakened interest in social questions.

The Bill was based on the report of a commission of inquiry which had been appointed in consequence of the facts brought to light at the time of the Factory Act. The report, largely quoted by Lord Ashley, revealed a state of things too fearful to be quietly contemplated. Children were brought to work in some parts of England and Wales as early as the age of four, in most places at five or six; while the practice of employing females underground was very common, if not universal in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, the East of Scotland, and South Wales. All the work which had to be done was of the most terrible description. The mines in the North of England, in Northumberland, Cumberland, and South Dur-

ham, were fairly ventilated, and the coal-beds were of tolerable thickness; but in many other places the coal-seams were not more than 22 to 28 inches in height, the heat was intense, water was constantly dripping, frequently it lay deep over the feet and lower limbs of the workers. Along these terrible passages, for a 100 or 200 yards in length, between the working-places, the children and women had to crawl along on all-fours, with a girdle passing round their waists, and harnessed by a chain between their legs to the carts they were drawing. The men worked absolutely naked, the women and children very nearly so. "I have been in water," said one woman, "up to my thighs; I go on my hands and feet, the road is very steep; when there is no rope we have to catch hold of anything we can; my clothes are wet through all day long; I have drawn till I have had the skin off me." "I found a little girl," said a sub-commissioner in Scotland, "six years of age, carrying half a cwt., and making regularly fourteen long journeys a day. The height ascended, and the distance along the road, exceeded in each journey the height of St. Paul's Cathedral." In many cases the work was continued on alternate days for sixteen, eighteen, or twenty hours out of the twenty-four. "I have repeatedly worked," said one girl seventeen years of age, "for twenty-four hours." The effect of such a life was inevitable. Stunted, crippled, misshapen, the workers were condemned inevitably to a premature old age and early death. Even the men, from want of proper ventilation, "died off," says the report, "like rotten sheep, and each generation is commonly extinct soon after fifty." Still worse were the moral effects. Brutal cruelty, a total loss of all sense of decency or modesty, drinking, fighting—in fact complete savagery, marked the collier life. The Bill, as Lord Ashley produced it, provided for the entire exclusion of all females from mines and collieries, and of all boys under thirteen years of age; secondly, for the employment as engineers of men over twenty-one only, for the purpose of avoiding numerous accidents; and thirdly, for the abolition of apprenticeships, by which pauper children had been rendered the absolute slaves of their masters till they reached the age of twenty-one. A few murmurs were heard that the report was over-coloured, a few protests against any interference with freedom of employment. But the general feeling was so excited by the revelations produced that the Bill passed without a division amidst the loud cheers of the House. It did not meet with quite so good a reception in the Upper House. It was indeed necessary to make some modifications in it before it was even introduced. A clause which had compelled the employment of boys on alternate days only

was given up, and instead of the total prohibition of apprenticeship its restriction to eight years was introduced. Even thus the Bill met with opposition. Some of the lords objected to any legislative interference with the labour market; others thought it had been hurried without consideration through the Commons, and needed more inquiry; and Lord Brougham took the opportunity of delivering a sort of lecture upon the dangers of social legislation. But in its amended shape the Bill passed, and was accepted under protest by Lord Ashley, who found that the Government were unwilling to alter the amended provisions or restore the clauses which had been omitted.

It had been feared that the Conservative Government might tamper with the new Poor Law, especially as on this point they would have received the support and gratitude of the Chartists. The full employment which the discussion of the financial arrangements had given Parliament prevented the introduction of any very important bill on the subject. But Government showed that it intended honestly to abide by the principles of the existing law, by continuing the commissioners for five years, and by reconstituting those Unions where the older form of poor relief was still in partial use. Protests were raised at the continued refusal of outdoor relief, but Sir James Graham was able to show that there was a large discretionary power still left in the hands of the guardians, and that as a matter of fact the Poor Law was not very rigidly worked. There was no just cause of complaint on this point when during the last year out of £3,884,000 expended on the poor nearly £3,000,000 had been given at the people's own homes. Graham, however, while acknowledging that out-door relief might be desirable under exceptional circumstances, refused to recognise it as a right. For even by the confession of its supporters it would inevitably bring about the payment of a portion of wages out of the poor-rates.

The Session closed with an elaborate assault by Lord Palmerston upon the policy of the Government, and what appeared a triumphant reply by Sir Robert Peel. Indeed there was a very general feeling that Sir Robert Peel's administration had justified the result of the last election. Not that the Government was popular. Peel's personal character was not attractive of popularity, nor was the intermediate line of policy which he had marked out for himself such as to please thoroughly either one party or the other. But his strength was indubitable, not only from the firm majority which he could wield in both Houses, but from the personal superiority recognised in him. And fortune seemed to

Apparent success of Peel's administration.

favour him. The Irish had been unusually quiet during the Session, and news had now reached England of the favourable termination of the Chinese war, the victories of our arms in India, and the conclusion of a long-unsettled question as to the boundary between Canada and the United States by what is known as the Ashburton Treaty (August 9, 1842). The policy of the Chinese War was indeed questioned, but the late Ministers were answerable for that, and the nation was very glad to have completed with success the inglorious contest. The withdrawal of the English army from Afghanistan, the practical reversal of the course pursued by Palmerston and Lord Auckland, afforded an opening for bitter attack, rendered the more easy by the injudicious proclamations and vacillating policy of Lord Ellenborough; but it was a cause of general congratulation that the prestige of English arms had been re-established; and most men were glad to get rid of a policy which had produced such terrible disasters, and were disposed to allow the wisdom of leaving the Afghans to settle their own affairs. Lord Palmerston too clamoured against the Ashburton Treaty, and called it a capitulation. England had indeed surrendered some of its claims, but as much as could fairly be required of the barren country in dispute had been obtained, and the friendship of America was well worth a little concession.

Yet there were signs on all sides of coming difficulties. The Session was scarcely over before riots of a most dangerous character broke out among the manufacturing population of Staffordshire and Lancashire. On the 6th of August a great meeting had been held on Mottram Moor, near Manchester, and a resolution had been passed that all labour should cease till the People's Charter became law. The fall of wages, which was the immediate cause of the outbreak, has been attributed to the intentional action of the partisans of the Anti-Corn-Law League, who expected to find in popular disturbances a means of furthering their object. The workmen left the mills, pulled up the plugs to prevent the working of the engines, and adopted the resolution just mentioned. The leaders endeavoured to spread the strike in all directions. They were entirely successful for the time in the potteries and at Manchester. A Convention was summoned for the 16th of August at Manchester. Before that time wild and destructive riots had taken place in Staffordshire, requiring the presence of soldiery. At the Manchester Convention there was a division of opinion, and Feargus O'Connor, who was present, raised some objections to the use of physical force. The majority, however, were in favour of it, and a

Serious causes of anxiety.

strongly-worded address, which was nothing less than a call to arms, was issued under the signature of the Executive Committee of the Chartists. But the Government was watchful and efficient; troops were poured into the disturbed districts, and arrests were very largely made. In Stafford gaol alone, where a Special Commission was opened in October, there were 800 men imprisoned. Feargus O'Connor was himself arrested in September for the part he had played in the disturbances. But though the movement had been suppressed the causes still remained, and the hope of securing order rested perhaps chiefly upon divisions among the discontented people. While one section still regarded O'Connor as its head, a rival organisation known as the Complete Suffrage party had arisen; the wealthier supporters of the Charter were withdrawing from the working men, and the question as to the use of physical or moral force caused still further division. The Anti-Corn-Law Leaguers also continued their agitation. The late financial measures could not as yet produce effect, and the League could still urge the misery of the country as a chief argument for the acceptance of their plan. They now agreed to collect £50,000 for the express purpose of disseminating their views. There was every prospect of a continued struggle on this point. In India, too, fresh difficulties had arisen. The invasion of Afghanistan had entailed certain after-results which seemed to threaten further war, and perhaps annexation. The territory of Sindh, upon the lower Indus, was ruled by three families of chiefs or Ameers, the descendants of Belloochee conquerors. It had once formed a part of the Afghan kingdom, but at the revolution which drove Shah Soojah from the throne of Cabul the Ameers had established their independence. They had been subjected to the regular process of Anglo-Indian encroachment; a Resident had been forced upon them, and treaties in the interest of the English made with them against their will. One branch of the invading army of Afghanistan in 1838 had passed through their territory, and their half-veiled hostility had induced the Indian Government to establish a permanent body of British troops in their dominions, and to wring from them a further treaty by which they engaged to pay a large sum of money annually for the maintenance of this garrison. Sir Charles Napier was at once commander of the troops and political agent to the Ameers, and had received in September 1842 a despatch from the Governor-General of a very threatening character. Lord Ellenborough, while demanding strong proof of the hostility of the Ameers, had declared it to be his intention

Chartist riots.
August 1842.

Danger of fresh
war in India.

to inflict signal punishment upon any of them who should appear to have taken advantage of the late disasters in Afghanistan to exhibit ill-feeling to the English. The situation seemed full of danger. Nor was the temporary lull of agitation in Ireland other than deceptive. The Repeal Association was still in full vigour, and preparing for further exhibitions of its influence. Strong and successful though the Ministry had been, it was clear that the coming year would still try its stability to the uttermost. But beyond the mere management of the difficulties which were pretty certain to arise, the Government would be called upon to exercise its judgment upon a new class of questions. Matters of social interest were everywhere pushing to the surface. Everywhere the awakened conscience of the nation was making itself felt. The moral and physical condition of the people, education, the working of the Poor Law, the management of prisons, were the topics which filled men's minds; while both in England and in Scotland the national Church was passing through a time of critical excitement.

In the coming year all these rising difficulties had to be faced. Sir Robert Peel and his Ministry proved at all events so far sufficient to encounter them, that the close of the Session saw him still in possession of a firm and powerful majority. Every opportunity was taken by the supporters of the Anti-Corn-Law League to introduce their views to public notice in the House, and to press the adoption of what they regarded as the great cure for the national difficulties; and circumstances rendered their position even stronger than before. The Government, in the Queen's Speech (February 2), had been obliged to confess that there was a notable falling off in the receipts of the revenue, and that an analysis showed that the diminution was chiefly such as must arise from the decreased purchase by the mass of the people of articles of comfort, luxury, and even necessity, a sure sign of the continued depression of industry and of the increasing misery of the industrial classes. Yet Peel was firm. Sufficient time had scarcely passed for a true estimate of the effects of his new system of finance. His income-tax enabled him to cover the deficiency. He remained resolute in his maintenance of the Corn Laws, but continued to introduce modifications in other directions, all tending towards free-trade.

With the powerful aid of the Duke of Wellington he succeeded in vindicating the policy of the Indian Government with regard to Afghanistan, and even in obtaining a vote of thanks to Lord Ellenborough and to the officers and men

Excitement
in Ireland.

New social
questions.

Peel overcomes
the difficulty
with the
Corn Leaguers.

Peel upholds
Ellenborough's
policy.

engaged in the late operations, though Lord Ellenborough's policy was subjected to bitter assault. Indeed, from the correspondence which has since come to light, it appears that on his first arrival in India he had really thought of ordering the immediate retreat of the English forces, with somewhat strange forgetfulness of the prisoners in the hands of Akbar Khan. The firmness of the generals employed and the consequent gradual improvement of our position had enabled him to carry out what was probably the best line of conduct which could have been adopted; and the charges which were brought against him were chiefly directed to his somewhat wanton assault upon the policy of his predecessor, and the ill-judged and theatrical tone of his despatches of triumph. A policy of which retribution and revenge is a part is always open to question, and the army was accused of reckless destruction and plunder. It would seem however that the conduct of the troops had been on the whole singularly moderate, although almost as a matter of course some disorders had arisen. It has been already mentioned that Lord Ellenborough's policy had assumed a somewhat aggressive character after the successful withdrawal of the army from Afghanistan. The threatening despatch of September to Sir Charles Napier in Sindh was followed by instructions to force upon the Ameers a new treaty by which their irregularly paid subsidy should be exchanged for the cession of Kurrachee, and some other towns, with a strip of land on either side of the Indus. Some pressure was necessary to bring the unwilling princes to the point. A very remarkable march across the desert put Sir Charles Napier in possession of the fort of Emaunghur, and Major Outram eventually brought the Ameers both of Hyderabad and Kurpore to affix their seals to the treaty. But it was scarcely signed before the temper of their troops, and probably their own wishes, induced them to make an assault upon Outram in the Residency of Hyderabad. With 100 men Outram succeeded in holding it for a while against 8000 assailants, and ultimately withdrew his little garrison in safety. Napier, although he based his subsequent action upon this breach of faith on the part of the Ameers had in fact already arrived at the conclusion that the use of arms was necessary, and at once upon Outram's arrival advanced against the Ameers. On the 17th of February he came upon them at Meeanee, and there, though the enemy numbered seven to one, completely routed them. On the 20th he entered Hyderabad, and by another great victory known as the battle of Hyderabad, obtained full command of the country. Early in April he wrote to the

The Sindh War ends favourably. 1843.

Governor-General, "I think I may venture to say Sindh is now subdued."

The year was not however over before hostilities broke out in another direction. The State of Gwalior had been left in the hands of the Mahrattas, an English Resident being stationed at the Court of Scindia, who was virtually under British protection. During the minority of Jankojee Rao Scindia, domestic disturbances had arisen in the State of Gwalior. The Maharanee, the widow of the late ruler, had deposed the Regent appointed by the English and substituted a friend of her own. The English Resident had thought it necessary to withdraw; and the whole tone of Mahratta government had assumed a character of hostility to the English. By the Treaty of Burhampore in 1804, the English had contracted to keep in readiness a body of troops which, on the requisition of the Mahratta Prince, should be at his service to establish his authority. It was of great importance that a state occupying the central position of Gwalior should be itself well governed, and in the hands of rulers willing and able to maintain order on the frontiers. Lord Ellenborough thought it necessary to intervene; he took advantage of the Treaty of Burhampore, and declared that he could not allow the minority of the Prince and his consequent inability to make a requisition to act to his detriment. Under pretext, therefore, that the disorders were derogatory to the authority of the young Scindia, he entered the Mahratta territory in December with an army under the command of Sir Hugh Gough. Proclaiming his pacific intentions, he began, as he believed, successful negotiations for the settlement of the government, and was preparing to withdraw when he found that the Mahratta troops had assembled in force at Maharajpore. There an important battle was fought and a complete victory won. A second English army, under Major-General Grey, on the same day won an equally decisive battle at Punniar. The consequence of these victories was the submission of the Mahratta Court; the fort of Gwalior was surrendered to the English, the Mahratta troops were disbanded, and a British contingent of nine regiments, maintained at the cost of the Gwalior State, substituted.

In spite of the prominence of social questions, the session produced but little direct legislation. Men still shrunk from any infringement of that complete personal and individual freedom to which Englishmen are so closely attached. Yet social evils which seemed in some degree traceable to that very freedom were forcing themselves upon the public notice, and, as on

The Gwalior war ends favourably. 1843.

Efforts at social legislation.

previous occasions, found a spokesman in Lord Ashley. While other men were seeking for means of alleviating the unquestioned depression of the labouring classes, and tracing it, with its consequences of discontent and riot, to physical and economic causes, to Lord Ashley it seemed that much at all events of the more distressing and dangerous part of the present social disorder was to be found in the moral darkness of the workman. It seemed to him that in the universal haste to appropriate the advantages of improved appliances, and to accumulate wealth, a dense population had been called into existence and left to fight its way with no rule of guidance but the necessities of a fierce competition, and the imperative desire to acquire the necessities of life. Under this impulse parents lost their natural care for their children, and regarding them only as instruments for obtaining money plunged them from their earliest years, without a shred of education, into the hardships and temptations of the mines, the workshops, and the streets. What could come from such a system but ignorance and crime? It was the duty and the wisdom of a State which by its arrangements had created an ever-increasing population to see at least that the children were educated. For their physical well-being Lord Ashley had already done much and was trying to do more. He now brought forward in Parliament a motion that an Address should be sent to the Queen begging her "to take into her instant and serious consideration the best means of diffusing the benefit and blessings of a moral and religious education among the working classes of her people." He had no difficulty in making out his case. The population of England and Wales in the last forty years showed an increase of more than seven millions. The lowest estimate of those who required education was 3,000,000, and after all deductions had been made for those who were educated privately, and for pauper children, there would still remain 1,800,000 for whose training the public were answerable. In the existing schools, whether of the Established Church or of the Dissenting bodies, somewhat over 800,000 pupils were taught, leaving nearly a million children to whom no education was given. The result was such as might be expected; the statistics of the great towns showed the most terrible youthful depravity. The statistics of the prisons showed an enormous percentage of ignorance; and the working of the existing system was brought into sharp relief when it appeared that the expenditure for the punishment of crime was £600,000 a year, the annual vote for education, which might tend to prevent it, was still only £30,000. As usual, when he laid

Ashley's
address to the
Queen on
Education.
Feb. 28, 1843.

bare the shortcomings of English society, Lord Ashley met with respectful hearing and approbation. The Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, declared that not only was he ready to support the Address, but that Government had already had the intention of doing something to further the cause of education. It was preparing a new Factory Bill, containing clauses insuring the compulsory education of pauper and factory children. The Address was agreed to without division, and on the receipt of the Queen's answer on the 8th of March Sir James Graham produced his Bill.

The Home Secretary had in view two distinct objects, the extension and amendment of the existing Factory Acts and the improvement of education. He desired to limit the hours of female labour to twelve, and to reduce the time during which children might be employed to six and a half hours a day. Those hours were to be consecutive, either in the morning or afternoon, and the stipulation already existing that no children should be employed without certificates of school attendance was to be continued. Upon this limitation he made an attempt to found a general system of education. Certificates were only to be received from schools fulfilling certain conditions. Of these, Government inspection was the first, but religious instruction also formed an integral part of the scheme. Upon this rock, as has so often happened, the plan was wrecked. Although great care was taken to avoid any arrangements or restrictions which could be regarded as injurious to perfect liberty of religious creed, the Dissenters and Roman Catholics found in the Bill traces of Church supremacy, and plied the Government with petitions against it, while the Radicals eagerly pressed their favourite scheme of wholly secular education. Sir James Graham, finding that what he had intended to be a general and comprehensive measure winning the approval of all parties afforded only ground for sectarian opposition, yielded to his opponents, and withdrew the Bill.

In February of the following year he reintroduced it shorn of its educational clauses. But the opposition offered was no less violent. Lord Ashley wished to introduce a clause limiting the working hours of young persons (that is, those between the age of thirteen and eighteen) to ten hours a day. The feeling of the House was curiously divided on the subject. The rigid economists, siding with the Government, regarded the interference with free labour as highly injurious. Several votes, direct and indirect, were taken upon the subject, with such varying results

Sir James
Graham's
Factory Bill
withdrawn.
June 1843.

His second
Factory Bill
carried.
May 1844.

that Sir James Graham declared that inextricable confusion had arisen, and that either a compromise must be effected or leave be given him to withdraw the present and introduce a new Bill. He stated that a compromise appeared to him out of the question. He believed that the restriction of hours would be injurious to the master manufacturers, and through them to the welfare of the country, that it must be followed by a diminution of wages, and would thus be injurious to the workmen also; that consequently he and his colleagues had determined to maintain the twelve hours limit. In the course of his speech he referred to an argument which had been used by his opponents, that a new social condition had come into existence which was to be met by new principles and new schemes of legislation. Legislative interference was to become the general rule. Adopting a phrase which had been used in a paper on this subject, he declared that he did not think it exaggeration to say that this was a commencement of a Jack Cade system of legislation. It was one of those unfortunate expressions which (like the word "aliens" used by Lord Lyndhurst with respect to the Irish) inevitably become a party catch-word, and are permanently affixed as marks for popular disapproval to the statesman who utters them. Sir James Graham was at once regarded as the arch enemy of the labouring classes. The second course as to the Factory Bill was adopted; a new Bill was introduced which did not repeal but only amended the existing Statute. It diminished the working hours of children to six and a half, and insisted upon those hours being consecutive, to allow time for their schooling. It extended the twelve hours limitation to include women as well as young persons. It rendered stricter the certificate of age and health required, and guarded against the use of dangerous machinery. With some difficulty—for the preceding events had heated the Opposition—this Bill was carried, but even at the time it was not regarded as a final settlement of the question. Although Sir James Graham's whole scheme thus failed, it must be laid to his credit that he recognised the necessity of general education, and did not shrink from producing a measure conceived with considerable liberality as a first step towards it.

This was not the only proof the Government gave of its recognition of its moral duties. Sir Robert Peel introduced and carried a plan for the establishment and endowment of Church districts. Leaving the building of the new churches to private liberality, he allowed the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to borrow capital from Queen Anne's Bounty, and to employ it under certain

Peel's Church districts.

restrictions for the endowment of the incumbents. By this means the very large and unwieldy parishes which had given rise to much spiritual destitution were gradually broken up.

In acting thus Peel showed his recognition of the great religious movement which went along with the other reforming impulses of the time. It had assumed in England, strangely enough, a shape which is generally connected with a dislike to reform. For it was ostensibly the apprehension of the introduction of liberalism and liberal principles into religion which mainly excited the activity of the leaders of the Oxford movement. But, looked at somewhat more closely, it will appear that the real groundwork of the movement was the recognition of the dangers attending the close connection of Church and State, the risk which lay in that connection of slothful acceptance of worldly position and of State orthodoxy, to the detriment of more real spiritual life. The same impulse is to be traced in the lengthened struggle which had divided the Church of Scotland, and which this year terminated in its violent Disruption. In both cases it was the indignant rejection of the idea that the spiritual interests of the nation can be subordinated to temporal authority, and the Church in its highest functions be other than supreme, which lay at the bottom of the movement. In both cases, too, there was an undercurrent of democratic feeling thoroughly consistent with the impulse of the time.

Religious movement of the time.

In Scotland a direct quarrel arose as to the limits of the authority of the Church on the one hand, and the State on the other. The question of lay patronage had always been a difficult one in the Scotch Church. The statutes which regulated the relation in which the Church stood to the State had varied on this point in accordance with the views of the Government of the time. But in 1707, at the Union, when the maintenance of the national Church became an integral part of the treaty, doubtful passages with regard to patronage were repealed, and the right was vested in the heritors and elders of the respective parishes. But subsequently, in the tenth year of Queen Anne's reign, the Statute of 1690, chapter v. (that is to say, the part settling the Scotch Church), was repealed, "in so far as relates to the presentation of ministers by heritors and others mentioned therein," and the right of presentation was restored to patrons, Presbyteries being obliged to receive and admit qualified persons when presented by the patron, and on the same conditions as before the making of the statute. Up till 1784 the Church had constantly complained of this,

Position of the Scotch Church.

but the patrons appear on the whole to have consulted the parishioners, and no very important quarrel arose. From that year the protest of the Church ceased, and the nomination to parishes had fallen entirely into the hands of the patrons. To the more ardent members of the Church this appeared at once to deprive the people of their voice in the appointment of their ministers, which they regarded as a fundamental principle of their ecclesiastical state, and to allow the interposition of secular interests and secular authority in matters of the highest spiritual importance. The General Assembly therefore, or rather the permanent committee of the Assembly, in 1834 passed what was known as the "Veto Act," by which, upon a protest of the male heads of families, being communicants, in any parish, the Presbytery was bound to reject the nominee, and this although no ground of objection was stated. It was this Act of the Assembly which produced the Disruption. The two chief cases in which the conflict between the Church and the Law Courts arose were known as the Auchterarder and Strathbogie cases. Immediately after the passing of the Veto Act, the Earl of Kinnoull, as patron, presented Mr. Young to the parish of Auchterarder. The male heads of families there objected to him, and he was rejected by the Presbytery. The patron and the presentee proceeded against the Presbytery at law. The General Assembly undertook the case of the Presbytery. After a lengthened trial decision was given by the Court of Session, in March 1838, against the Presbytery. Thus the Veto Act was declared illegal. The case was carried to the House of Lords, and the highest Court of justice dismissed the appeal and upheld the judgment of the Court of Session. On this, in the General Assembly, the Church and State party, headed by Dr. Cook, moved that the Veto Act, having been declared illegal, should cease to be enforced. The "Non-intrusionists," as they were called, headed by Dr. Chalmers, on the contrary took up the position that the Civil Court could declare to whom the emoluments might go, but could not set aside an ecclesiastical law of the Assembly. A considerable majority upheld Dr. Chalmers's view. In the second case, a Mr. Edwards had been presented by the lawful patron to the parish of Marnoch; the heads of families had exercised their veto; the seven ministers who constituted the Presbytery of Strathbogie, in which Marnoch was, refused to admit him, and Mr. Edwards obtained a decree from the Supreme Court against the Presbytery. The seven ministers preferred fulfilling the obvious duty of obeying the law rather than the questionable duty of obeying the

*The Veto Act.
1834.*

*The Non-
intrusionists.
May 22, 1839.*

Assembly, and submitted to the Court. For this, in a very high-handed manner, they were summoned to the bar of the General Assembly and deposed from their ministry, while Mr. Edwards, for having resorted to a Civil Court, was deprived of his licence as a minister.

There were thus in fact two points at issue—the one the limit between the right of the patron and the right of the parish, the other the limit between the jurisdiction of the Church Courts and the jurisdiction of the Civil Courts. Lord Melbourne's Ministry had refused to take any measures on the subject. The Prime Minister had declared that the best way of maintaining the law was to allow the law to take care of itself. A private attempt of Lord Aberdeen had come to nothing, the one side regarding it as an assault upon patronage, the other side as a means of permanently riveting patronage on the Church. Thus, left to follow its own course, the quarrel increased in bitterness. The Non-intrusionists assumed all the airs of persecuted Covenanters, apparently forgetful of their own persecuting action with regard to the Strathbogie ministers. High-flown language was employed which, were it not that those who employed it were really so much in earnest, would be little short of ridiculous. The demands of the Non-intrusionists grew into a demand for the absolute destruction of all lay patronage, and preparation was openly made for a secession from the Establishment. At length, in 1842, the General Assembly drew up two addresses to the Crown; one to call attention to a document already compiled, and known as "The Claim, Declaration, and Protest against the encroachments of the Court of Session;" the other to ask for the abolition of the Church patronage in Scotland. And along with these a memorial was sent, declaring that if redress were not afforded, the inevitable result would be the disruption of the Established Church. The Government felt it necessary to answer these addresses, and Sir James Graham drew up a long and very able reply, in which, passing in review the statutes and precedents alleged by the Assembly as proofs of their case, and the history of the present struggle, he came to the conclusion that there were ample powers already in the Church to prevent the admission of improper candidates, that the Presbytery had the undoubted right on good cause shown to reject a presentee, but that it was impossible to admit the claims of the Church to be the sole judge of what was or was not an ecclesiastical question, and therefore beyond the competency of the Civil Courts. He concluded by the assertion that "Her Majesty's

*Appeal to
Government.
June 1, 1842.*

*Sir James
Graham's
answer.*

Ministers were bound to declare they could not recommend the total abrogation of the rights of the Crown and other patrons."

The reception of this reply produced, as its writer had foreseen, the Disruption of the Church. There was a striking scene in the General Assembly. The members proceeded from their service in the High Church to their place of meeting in St. Andrew's. The approaches and galleries were crowded; the sympathies of the populace were with the seceders, and as each well-known leader entered he was loudly applauded. Dr. Welsh was Moderator. He should have proceeded to examine the constitution of the Assembly; instead of doing so, he stated that there were legal difficulties in the way of carrying out this duty, and proceeded to read a protest of some length from the ministers and elders of the Non-intrusionist party. He then rose and left the hall, and one after the other, slowly and silently, those who agreed with him rose and followed. To the number of 169 they passed in procession four abreast, and surrounded by a sympathetic crowd, to a hall at Canonmills, which had been prepared for them. There 300 other ministers, not members of the Assembly, awaited them, and there, with Dr. Chalmers as their Moderator, they constituted themselves a Free Presbyterian Church. For several days they proceeded with the necessary business of organisation. Dr. Chalmers was able to say that for the Building Fund £150,000 had already been collected, and upwards of £72,000 for the Sustentation Fund; and on the Sunday following Dr. Candlish preached in the first Free Church. The number of those ministers who signed the protest, or were enrolled in the first list of the secession, was 395. There remained of ministers who did not leave the Church, 835. The Government thought it necessary for the settlement of men's minds to explain the exact condition of the law, and Lord Aberdeen brought in and passed a Bill to the effect that the Veto Act was repealed, that the Presbytery could not refuse to admit to trial a minister duly presented, but that, on objection being raised by the parishioners, they should inquire as to the general fitness of the candidate and his special fitness for the parish, and give their verdict accordingly. From their judgment an appeal lay to the higher Church Court only. The Civil Courts could interfere only if the Presbytery exceeded its jurisdiction.

There was a determination not to compromise in a matter of conscience, a self-denial in the ready resignation of their benefices, a nobility in the view that the spiritual liberties of the people should be maintained against the rights of property, which compels an admir-

The Disruption.
May 18, 1843.

*Formation
of the Free
Church.*
May 18, 1843.

ation and respect for the first leaders of the Free Church movement; yet it is difficult to feel much sympathy with men who, under the disguise of maintaining popular spiritual rights, sought to destroy that supervision on the part of the lay authorities of the kingdom which has proved to be the sole safeguard against ecclesiastical tyranny.

The movement in England did not reach to the point of disruption. It drove a certain number of those most completely affected by it to separate from the English Church and join the communion of Rome. But the larger portion of them contrived to find in the elasticity of the English formula a means of reconciling their conscience to remaining within their own Church, and after a period of trouble and unpopularity succeeded in gradually establishing their position. Their theories were indeed such as to attract to their side almost inevitably a large support among the clergy, and even among such of the laity as were more inclined to be governed by sentiment than by reason. The substitution of dogma for religion; the desire for certainty resting upon authority, and the consequent relaxation of the trouble of forming opinions; the idea of Catholic unity, in itself so grand and so capable of attracting minds of a very high order; the appeal to the senses and to the means of gratifying æsthetic tastes offered by ornate services; the introduction of the supernatural in the perpetual miracle of the real presence,—all told strongly in their favour. Intellectual idleness, the love of beauty, and the pleasure felt in immediate intercourse with the unseen were all alike gratified; while to the clergy themselves no theory could be more attractive than one which endows them with special and almost supernatural powers, and sets them apart, irrespective of their own characters or gifts, as a special and sacred class. It has thus happened that, in spite of its early struggles, the movement has been to a large degree successful, and the theories on which it rested either in whole or in part enjoy a temporary triumph.

That the High Church movement should owe its success to its appeal to some of the lower and more general tendencies of the time, to the indifferentism and wealth of the laity, and to the obvious self-interest of the clergy, in no wise prevents it from having originated in the minds of most earnest and high-minded men. It was not at first confined to Oxford, but before long the vigour and ability of John Henry Newman, seconded by the earnestness of Hurrell Froude, the delicate and spiritual purity of Keble, and the learning and authority of Dr. Pusey, made that University

*The Tractarian
movement.*

*Origin of the
movement.*

its undoubted centre, and gained for it the title of the "Oxford Movement." Keble, the author of the *Christian Year*, though he had left Oxford, was, like Newman and Froude, a Fellow of Oriel College, hitherto regarded as the stronghold of Liberalism; and it may be presumed that it was partly a reaction from the views of Coppleston, of Whately, and of Arnold which drove them so vigorously along the course they pursued. According to Newman's own account, at the time when he began to issue the publications known as *Tracts for the Times*, which have given the movement its second name of "Tractarian," he rested upon three great articles of belief: The importance of dogma—that is to say, that "religion and dogma are one;" the existence of a visible Church, with sacraments and rites which were the channels of invisible grace—that is, that there is one Catholic Church, and one only, through which the means of grace flow; and hostility to the Roman Church, a hostility which by degrees grew weaker, till it entirely disappeared. The object of these Tracts, and of the numerous theological works issued by the school, was the establishment of the view that that system of the English Church which they spoke of as "*the via media*," was a real religion lying between Popery with its errors on one side, and Protestantism, liberal and anti-dogmatic, and leading, as the writers thought, to atheism on the other. With this view, the writings of the High Church divines of the seventeenth century were brought forward as expressing the real opinion of the English Church, the prevalent more Protestant view being regarded as erroneous. Antiquity, as explained in the utterances of the Fathers, was taken as the ground on which the English Church could claim to be the direct descendant of the one primitive Church; and every sign of doctrine or ritual, holding affinity to the doctrine or ritual of the more widely spread Roman Church, was emphasised.

At length, in 1841, Newman determined definitely to examine how far it was possible to hold the same doctrines as the Roman Church within the limits of the English Articles. The outcome of this examination was No. 90 of the Tracts. As the general belief was then, and is now, that the Articles had been drawn up in opposition to the Roman Church, it appeared to all those unaffected by the movement that this was an unfair use of the possible defects in the language of the Articles. When we remember the history of the

Publication of
Tract 90.
1841.

Articles, and recognise that they were distinctly intended to be a wide and elastic formula, the basis of a national Church, incorporating as far as was possible all shades of opinion, it

is difficult to say that the meaning given them in Tract 90 is untenable. But it is obvious that if they may be stretched in one direction, they may equally be stretched in the other; and that if Anglo-Catholics can continue within the limits of the English Church holding nearly all the doctrines which our early Reformers disapproved of in the Church of Rome, they have no right to assert them as the sole doctrines of the English Church, or to find fault with those of different opinions who press to the opposite extreme the laxity of wording which is to be found in the Articles. In other words, if it be right to treat the Articles in this fashion, it follows of necessity that the Church of England is not a strictly dogmatic Church. Almost inevitably Tract 90 produced a great ferment of opinion. It was censured by the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houses in Oxford, the bishops generally mentioned it with disapprobation in their charges, the Bishop of Oxford requested Mr. Newman to cease from the publication of the Tracts. It was, in fact, the critical point of the movement. Led on imperceptibly by his logic, Newman's own position in the Church had become less and less assured. Already, before the publication of the Tracts, he had begun to question the catholicity of the English Church. Minds with less power of delicate logical discrimination had been pressing his own arguments to conclusions he was not yet willing to admit. The refusal of the authorities of the Church to allow that such doctrines as these men regarded as alone capable of rendering the English Church Catholic could exist within its limits drove them further and further on their course, and numerous individual perversions to Rome were the result. For several years longer Newman himself remained in doubt, but in 1843 he thought it incumbent on him to resign his clerical duties, and in October 1845 he finally passed over to the Roman communion.

Mr. Newman is so incomparably the most interesting person among the Tractarians that, although he himself repudiated the idea of leadership, and claimed the position of the chief author of the party only, to follow his career is in fact to trace the history of the movement. It seems difficult to deny that in passing over to the Roman Church he was acting in the only manner which was truly consistent with his principles. But such was not the view of the greater part of those whose minds he had influenced. With Dr. Pusey as their leader, they saw a possibility of still remaining in the English Church. As in the case of other movements within the Church, the growth of Tractarian opinions brought with it

The High
Church under
Dr. Pusey.
1843.

much new spiritual life. It was at least a protest against the quiet acceptance of things as they were, another instance of the awakened sense of reality and duty which marks the time. As in the case of other movements, too, it survived chiefly because it fell in with very general and not very noble tendencies of the time, and harmonised well with class interests. But whatever may be the good that it brought with it, by its reactionary character, by the offence which it gave to minds of Protestant tendencies, and by the separation which it evidently implied between the secular and religious life of the nation, it raised a fresh difficulty in the way of re-establishing a really national Church, changed the Church of England more completely into a sect, and rendered more probable its ultimate separation from the State.

The administration may, on the whole, have the credit for the comparative quiet which reigned in the manufacturing districts during the year. Vigorous action had been taken against the late rioters. Feargus O'Connor and fifty-eight others had been tried with various success at Lancaster, in the spring, with the effect apparently of quieting for the time the movements of the Chartists. In Wales, the discontent, partially repressed in England, assumed a somewhat threatening form. What are known as the Rebecca Riots broke out in June. The form which these riots took was the appearance of armed crowds disguised in female dress, and bent upon the destruction of turnpikes. The claims of the rioters went however a good deal further, and seem to have been in some degree connected with hostility to the English Church, and the growth of Dissent. They demanded the removal of all turnpike gates, the abolition of tithes and of Church rates, and of the new poor law. Originally appearing in Carmarthen, where they took possession of the workhouse and were only suppressed by the employment of troops, the rioters re-appeared throughout North Wales almost nightly for several months. Hundreds of turnpikes were destroyed, insults and violent ill-usage were employed against the authorities, occasionally even murder resulted. Some sort of organisation appears to have existed, which publicly claimed for itself the command of more than 100,000 men. "If God spares her life," wrote some agent of the Association under the name of Rebecca, "she will work out the redemption of her poor oppressed children." Government however was able to suppress the rioters; a special Commission was issued for the trial of the prisoners, most of whom pleaded guilty, and the difficulty passed away. But in accordance with the growing recog-

Result of the
Tractarian
movement.

The Rebecca
Riots.
June-Sept.
1843.

nition of its duties on the part of Government, suppression was not regarded as sufficient; a Commission was appointed to examine into the causes of the discontent, and in the course of the next year, upon its recommendations, the system of turnpike trusts in Wales was wholly remodelled. Provision was made by loan, and by charges on the rates so arranged as to fall upon the owner and not the occupier, for the gradual extinction of the existing debt upon the trusts. The management of the roads was then to be placed in the hands of county boards, consisting in part of representatives of the ratepayers; the county would thus have the management of its own gate-tolls, which could be considerably reduced.

But nearly all questions, whether of social improvement and order, of foreign policy or of religious growth, were overshadowed by the absorbing interest of the renewed agitation in Ireland. After succeeding in procuring the Catholic Emancipation Bill, O'Connell had raised the question of the Repeal of the Act of Union. He was then in the triumph of his late success, and was able to secure a considerable following of Irish members pledged to his views. The English Parliament had refused in 1834 to consider the question of Repeal, but had pledged itself by resolution to "apply its best attention to the removal of all just causes of complaint, and to the promotion of all well-considered measures of improvement for the benefit of Ireland." The resolution had been presented as an address to the Crown by both Houses. From that time the agitation for Repeal appeared to have died out. O'Connell gave his general support to the Whigs, attempting as far as Ireland was concerned to procure "equal justice," as it was called—that is to say, a Union of a true Imperial character, in which Ireland should enjoy the same laws as England, and the same freedom from legislation of an exclusively partisan character. The results had not answered his hopes. None of the measures of a conciliatory character introduced by the Whigs had been carried without considerable mutilation, nor had they been of that thoroughgoing description which O'Connell and those who thought with him desired. Despairing apparently of success in this direction, especially as the Whig Government, on which alone he could rely, seemed certainly on the point of falling, in the year 1840 O'Connell fell back upon his scheme of Repeal, and established the Repeal Association in Dublin. The movement seemed however to have little life. Week after week the Association met in the Corn Exchange, and the weekly subscriptions which were raised for the maintenance of the cause were received;

Rearrangement
of the turnpike
trusts in Wales.

Repeal agita-
tion in Ireland.

but there was little enthusiasm, and the subscriptions were not large. An attempt made by O'Connell to rouse Repeal enthusiasm in the north proved a signal failure, and at the general election in 1841 less than a dozen members pledged to Repeal were returned; O'Connell himself lost his seat for Dublin.

Towards the close of the year 1842, however, a marked change was visible in the fortunes of the agitation. O'Connell's old lieutenants in his campaign in favour of the Catholic claims had followed him into English politics, and had joined in his alliance with the Whigs. They now gave place to younger and more enthusiastic men who aimed at the fusion of all religions and parties in Ireland, and desired to sink all differences in devotion to the national cause. In support of this view the *Nation* newspaper was established, in which every topic which could tend to raise national self-respect or excite national ardour was treated with high ability. The writers were young men, Protestant as well as Catholic, of the middle-class and of good education. The best known among them are Gavan Duffy, Thomas Davis, and John Dillon. The effect of this paper, and of the feeling of which it was the expression, was very powerful and almost instantaneous. Before many weeks were over the Repeal rent had risen to more than £1500 a week; and with the strength of this new band of partisans, faithful to him as a leader, though on many points disagreeing with him, O'Connell again resumed more than his old supremacy, and occupied a position even more threatening than during the agitation for Catholic Emancipation. A formal discussion held by the Dublin Corporation and the declaration by a large majority in favour of Repeal, added fresh strength to the movement. The organisation began to assume a national character. The Catholic bishops for the most part declared their adhesion to it, and the Protestant loyalists of Ireland began to feel uneasy that the Prime Minister was taking no steps to check it.

On the 9th of May the attention of Ministers was drawn in both Houses to what was going on in Ireland, and they were asked whether they intended to take any measures to suppress Repeal meetings and to maintain the Union. Sir Robert Peel gave a very clear answer. Quoting the declarations of Lord Althorpe in 1834, he declared that, though he deprecated above all things civil war, there was no alternative which he did not think preferable to the dismemberment of the Empire. The effect of this threat was merely to exasperate the Repealers, and to drive men who had hitherto held aloof from it to

Peel threatens coercion.
May 1843.

join the national movement. It is probable also that the menace of armed coercion enlisted the sympathy of many foreigners upon the side of the Irish. At the same time, it almost inevitably obliged the Irish leaders to consider how far they intended to go, and there seems little doubt but that the more advanced among them contemplated if necessary an appeal to arms. But they were loyal followers of their leader, O'Connell, who, although he began to use language which might easily imply that he too looked to the possibility of armed resistance, never in fact intended to proceed to extremities. He had a well-grounded belief in his own skill in keeping within the law, and in the weakness of Peel when brought face to face with an overwhelming declaration of the popular will. He had already seen him yield upon the Catholic question, accept the Reform Bill, and show a tendency to change in his fiscal legislation. And O'Connell thought that he might safely continue to excite and threaten, sure at the last moment that his end would be obtained without bloodshed. The form which he gave to his agitation was therefore intended to show the vast and threatening amount of popular sympathy on which he could reckon. Meetings were held in all parts of Ireland so numerous attended that they were spoken of as "monster meetings." But crowded though they were, they were invariably orderly, the people frequently attending them parish by parish, headed by bands of music, and with something little short of military regularity.

O'Connell adheres to constitutional agitation.

The first blow struck by the Government was directed against the gentry who attended these meetings. O'Connell and his son, Lord French, Mr. Roche, subsequently Lord Fermoy, and several others—in all twenty-four—were removed by the Irish Lord Chancellor from the list of magistrates. But this attack was not very successful. The Irish gentry, though desiring union with England, were very sensitive to any signs of indignity put upon Ireland as a nation. They considered the removal of the magistrates as an arbitrary act of English interference, and a considerable number, headed by Smith O'Brien, resigned their offices as magistrates. Advantage was taken of this by the Nationalists to separate the interests of the Irish and English still further. The displaced magistrates formed courts of arbitration, which superseded for all members of the Association the ordinary courts of Justices. It appeared as though the nation, organised if not drilled, was already supplied with the materials of an army and arrangements for the prosecution of justice. The action of the

Removal of Liberal Irish Magistrates.

The Repealers form courts of arbitration.

Government in this matter raised a grave constitutional question. The magistrates could only have been displaced on the ground of having attended illegal meetings. Yet in what respect were the Repeal meetings illegal? The right of public meeting was accepted as constitutional. The Reform Bill had been granted evidently to the demands of public meetings; the Chartists had been allowed, so long as no violence occurred, to meet without restraint; the Corn-Law agitation was in full vigour. It was certain that so questionable a step would be taken hold of by the Opposition in Parliament. Lord John Russell, Lord Cottenham (the late Chancellor), and Lord Campbell united in declaring that assemblies for a legal purpose were not illegal; that the Act of Union was a legislative Act as open to discussion and repeal as any other; and that to assemble for the purpose of petitioning against it was not an illegal purpose. The Government were as yet unable to declare the illegality of the meetings, and contented themselves with defending their action upon the ground that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland had the right to exercise his discretion in the matter. Nevertheless, it appeared that practically the Government believed that their opinion made that illegal which high constitutional authority declared to be strictly within the limits of the law.

The second blow struck by Government showed that they were determined to regard the Repeal movement not as a constitutional agitation, but as an incipient rebellion. An Arms Act, regulating the possession of arms in Ireland, was already existing, but would before long come to an end. A new Act of a far more stringent character was now introduced instead of a mere renewal of the expiring Act. It encountered, as Coercion Bills have invariably encountered, a most determined opposition. The Whigs took up the question; it was fought at every stage, and upon every clause in Committee. Obstruction, strongly resembling that which we have of late years seen revived, was freely used; and it was only by the sacrifice of the greater part of the session to it that the Bill was ultimately passed by a majority of eighty. The prolonged contest over this Bill proved, if any proof was wanting, the difficulty of encountering the national demands of Ireland by Parliamentary means; yet it appeared almost as difficult to oppose them in any other way. The Government was, however, determined against compromise. A fair opportunity for conciliatory action was given them. Smith O'Brien, a Protestant Irishman, member for Limerick, and a man as yet a declared opponent to Repeal, brought forward, with the appro-

Irish Arms
Bill carried.
Aug. 1843.

bation of the Whig Opposition, a motion in the House for a Committee for the purpose of taking into consideration the causes of the discontent prevailing in Ireland, with a view to the redress of grievances and the establishment of a just and impartial administration. His speech upon the 4th of July was a full and temperate statement of the Irish claims. It may be taken as an exposition stripped of all exaggeration of the theory of the Repealers. Some of his assertions could no doubt be answered. In fact, the speaker did not assert them as being absolutely true; he declared them to be the opinion accepted in Ireland, and demanded a full investigation of them, with a view to the removal of grievances should they be proved. At the Union, he said, which it was impossible to forget was completed by very questionable means, and with an implied promise on the part of Pitt which he could not perform, the two nations, by an Act of both their Parliaments, entered into partnership. The questions which could arise are these: Did the Irish nation thereby cease to be a nation? If experience proves that the partnership has produced disastrous results, may it or may it not, at the general demand of one of the nations, be dissolved? Had it ceased to be a nation, had it been incorporated with England, it would have come immediately under English laws and English administration. Yet in every important instance it has been subject to special legislation. Thus, while on every point on which English interests were served the unity of the nations has been upheld, the inherent difference of the two nations has been fully recognised when to acknowledge the similarity would have been to the disadvantage of England. The principle that the national Church should be the Church of the majority was set aside, and the Protestant Church of England, supported by payments from the Catholic people, was still upheld. And but a few years ago, disabilities of many sorts unknown in England were laid upon the Catholics. The peculiar English tenure of land, —the landlord and the tenant-at-will—though contrary to the feelings and requirements of the Irish, was forced upon the country. A Poor Law differing but slightly from the English Poor Law was hastily established on the recommendation of a single commissioner in opposition to the careful recommendations of those who knew Ireland best. And even lately alterations in the regulations of trade advantageous to the manufacturing population of England, but adverse to the agricultural interests of Ireland, had been thrust upon it. On the other hand, it had been thought necessary in the Reform Bill to establish a different franchise, to allow Ireland a different proportion

Smith O'Brien's
speech.

of seats. There was a different system of registration. When, after long contests, an Irish Municipal Reform Bill had been passed, it was wholly different from the English, and the municipal franchise was more restricted; while the whole period was full of instances of exceptional legislation of a coercive character. Was it possible, in the face of such facts, to assert that Ireland was the same as England, and that it did not retain its nationality? But, secondly, had the alliance been favourable to Ireland? The assertion was that that country was saddled with its share of payment of the National Debt contracted before the Union. The terms of the Union had left the Exchequers separate, but had allowed for their consolidation if at any time the national debt of Ireland should be in proportion of two to fifteen to that of England. The reckless placing of debt upon the charge of the Irish Exchequer during the war had brought that condition about, and England actually prided itself on its liberality in allowing the consolidation to take place. It could be proved by figures, as well as by the general opinion of the people, that trade had consistently declined. It was certain that the landlords and nobility had been attracted to the seat of Government, that absenteeism was the result, and the spending of Irish rent in England. The removal of all the administrative and fiscal departments to England had further lessened the expenditure of public money in the country. Harbours, better than any in England, were left idle and deserted. The application of the economic law of *laissez faire* had induced the Government to refuse all assistance in the way of guarantee for the construction of railroads, the first necessity for opening up the resources of the country. The very concessions made had been grudgingly used; scarcely any Catholics had been admitted to office; all the high places in the administration were occupied by Englishmen. As a general consequence Ireland was in a state of misery unequalled in the world. Wages were two or three shillings a week; rents so high that they were not paid, and could not be paid, were yet maintained, and the accumulated mass of arrears thus due made the small tenants mere slaves to the landlords. For the convenience of absentees, resident middlemen had been introduced, still further driving up the rents and rendering the condition of the peasantry still worse. The reports of the Poor Law Commissioners described the people as living upon the wild weeds, and upwards of a million were paupers. With such a condition before them, was it not natural and right that the Irish nation should express, as it was now doing, its almost universal belief that as the smaller and weaker partner it had lost unspeakably

by its bargain, and could look for some alleviation of its ills only to the hands of those who knew and sympathised with its wants? At all events, was there not here full ground for inquiry?

There was certainly an opportunity offered such as could never come again. But Sir Robert Peel was encountering that difficulty which inevitably arises from the determination of Englishmen to treat everything as a party question. He could not shock his friends in England by yielding to a demand which the Whigs supported, or refuse to listen to the pressure of the Protestant and Tory landlords in Ireland. Nor, of course, were the assertions of the Opposition to be taken without modification. Nor could a ruler, with a strong view of the duties of Government, be blind to the disorders which attended the movement in Ireland, or the apparent annihilation of the functions of Government by the power exercised by the Association. The difficulty which has constantly rendered the successful treatment of Ireland nearly impossible was there before him—the problem how at once to maintain the law and to satisfy the lawless. It is difficult to see how any solution of this problem can be found short of the complete triumph of one side or the other; but Peel, still believing that a middle course might be found, and that the firm establishment of authority without exceptional powers was sufficient to restore order, refused the proposed inquiry, and suggested no new measures either of a coercive or remedial nature.

Peel refuses
O'Brien's motion
for inquiry.

As a natural consequence, the agitation in Ireland only increased. Ineffectual measures of repression, such as the Irish Arms Act, could produce no other result. O'Connell, certain as he said that Peel would not fight, continued to hold meetings constantly increasing in importance. In August, at Tara, the supposed royal palace of the ancient Irish kings, a meeting estimated by some at 1,200,000 assembled, and the Liberator, as he was called, declared himself in a position to announce that in twelve months there would be a Parliament in College Green. Later in the autumn (October 1), at Mulloghmast in Leinster, the same scene was repeated, with the addition that on this occasion a national cap, which his enemies chose to regard as a crown, was solemnly offered to O'Connell. Meanwhile the younger men of the party, although doubting O'Connell's courage, were acting as though a crisis was approaching. They continued to work at the formation of a nation within the nation. They carried on negotiations with their sympathisers, both in America and France, and persuaded

Consequent
increase of the
agitation.

Monster
meetings.

VICT.

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their leader to allow a convention of 300 representatives to meet in Dublin. Thus, with its organised parishes, its courts of arbitration, its foreign friends, and its convention, the Repeal organisation seemed to possess the germs at all events of an army, a judicial system, a foreign policy, and a Parliament. At length, on the 8th of October, the monster meetings were to be closed by an assembly of unusual completeness at Clontarf. Steps had for some time been taken by the Government to increase the strength of the army and of the fortifications in the country, and it was whispered that the Clontarf meeting would be forbidden. With questionable justice, the proclamation to this effect was delayed till the very day before the meeting was to assemble. When at length it was issued, it appeared as though the moment contemplated by O'Connell in many of his speeches had arrived—the moment at which constitutional action, assaulted by the arms of authority, was to give place to sterner methods. But O'Connell had never intended to proceed to extremities. He at once ordered the postponement of the meeting in obedience to the proclamation; and his more energetic followers, though bitterly disappointed, thought it right to avoid a disruption of the party, and still to trust to their leader. It was only by their most vigorous exertions that those who were crowding to the place of rendezvous were kept back, and a scene of bloodshed avoided, which the presence of troops and artillery at Clontarf would have rendered inevitable had the crowd assembled.

A week after the suppression of the meeting the blow was followed up by the arrest of O'Connell himself, his son John, and several others of the more prominent speakers and writers of his party. They were charged with conspiracy, "with having unlawfully, maliciously, and seditiously combined for the purpose of raising discontent among her Majesty's subjects, and in opposition to the Government, with stirring up ill-will between her Majesty's subjects, with exciting disaffection in the army, with assembling in large meetings for the purpose of intimidation, and with bringing hatred and contempt upon the Courts of law." It was a hazardous charge to bring. That some of the acts of the Association might be illegal was probable enough. To prove a conspiracy in any but the most extremely technical sense seemed almost impossible. Nor did it seem probable that any jury of Irishmen fairly collected would be induced to find the accused guilty. But it can scarcely be said that the jury was fairly chosen; the lists from which it was selected were very imperfect, and the imperfection consisted largely in

The Clontarf
meeting
forbidden.

Arrest of
O'Connell and
other leaders.

the omission of Catholics. The imperfection was acknowledged; but the Crown lawyers and the judges refused to let it stand in the way of the trial, and ultimately, after each party had exercised its right of challenge, there proved to be no single Catholic upon the remaining list. The trial lasted for more than three weeks, and was closed by a summing-up by the presiding judge, which had the character of a speech for the prosecution rather than a judicial balancing of evidence. Under these circumstances Government obtained a verdict, and three months later (May 30) the prisoners were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment and fine.

But there were certain technical questions affecting the legality both of the trial and the verdict which enabled the traversers (as the accused were called) to bring the matter before the House of Lords. Meanwhile their imprisonment began. The questions raised were the legality of the jury, confessedly chosen from an imperfect list; the validity in law of certain of the counts of the indictment; and finally, whether—the prisoners "having been found guilty under various counts, and sentenced generally for the aforesaid offences," the sentence, which appeared not to define the offences for which the punishment was inflicted, was good in law. These questions were referred to the English judges, who admitted that there were errors in the indictment and imperfections in the jury list, but held that, as the Sheriff was not charged with partiality, the Irish Court was right in accepting the jury; and that, as some of the counts of the indictment were good, the judgment might be supported on the good counts, and that, on the whole, there was no ground for setting aside the verdict of the Irish Court. From this opinion Justices Parke and Coltman dissented. The opinions of the judges having been heard, the House of Lords was called upon for its decision. It is usual in such cases for those members of the House alone to vote who have held judicial office. Of these there were but five. Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Brougham upheld the opinion of the majority of the judges, but Lord Cottenham, Lord Campbell, and Lord Chief Justice Denman gave their adhesion to the view of Parke and Coltman, and moved that the decision should be reversed. It was with some difficulty that the lay Lords, eager to uphold the verdict, were persuaded to waive their right of voting, and to allow the Court to act in accordance with precedent. But the question was finally left in the hands of the law Lords, the verdict reversed, and O'Connell and his friends set at liberty. As the majority in the House of Lords were opponents to the Government, it is difficult to determine

The verdict.
Feb. 1844.

The verdict
reversed.
Sep. 4, 1844.

how far party feeling influenced the decision. At all events, though it was a rude shock to the Government, the failure of the prosecution had some effect in proving that substantial justice was to be obtained from England even in the most critical political questions. Though the technical victory lay with O'Connell, he was not able to use it. Devoid of high courage, his near approach to disaster appears to have cowed him. It is probable that he already felt the growing influence of the younger and more violent party which was to take his place, and feared lest, if he pushed matters further, the peaceful and constitutional method of agitation, which alone he contemplated, would be endangered. He was old too, and disease was creeping on him. Though the Irish question still remained the great difficulty in the way of English statesmanship, it lost for a while its extreme and dangerous urgency. On the other hand, the Prime Minister had also learned a lesson, and, true to his nature, was beginning to think that the time had arrived for retiring from his position of unyielding authority.

The session of 1844 opened while the trial of O'Connell and his partisans was still proceeding. On Irish affairs, though suggesting measures of a somewhat conciliatory character—such as a Commission upon land tenures, an improvement of the registration, and if necessary, a reform of the franchise—the Ministry in the Queen's Speech were therefore reticent. On other points they could speak in a tone of satisfaction and hope. Peace and friendship were declared to characterise our foreign relations, and the disturbances which had marked the preceding year had been successfully encountered. The offspring chiefly of want, they had yielded to an improvement in trade, and to a consequent increase of employment. For this improvement the Ministry took credit for themselves, tracing it chiefly to their new financial arrangements, which had also, in so far as they affected the revenue, been so successful that there was a considerable surplus in hand.

In fact, whatever results attended his Irish policy, it was plain that Peel had secured a great victory as a financier. Feeling that this was his strongest point, it was natural that it should influence his action, and through him the action of Parliament. For the next few years financial questions come constantly to the front. It was through them that the Minister looked to remove the discontent in the country, at the bottom of which lay want of employment. His mind was rapidly moving forward towards the idea that employment was best secured by lessening, as far as possible, the cost of production, an end attainable by the removal of all taxes

Queen's Speech.
Feb. 3, 1844.

Peel's financial
policy.

upon food, and of all checks upon the introduction into England of the raw materials, and by putting commercial transactions on as firm a basis as possible.

The Bank Charter had been renewed in 1833. By a clause in the Act renewing it, it was open to Parliament to revise or cancel the charter in the year 1845. An opportunity was thus afforded to Peel for attempting to remove errors in the system of the currency, which had more than once produced disastrous results. The commercial history of the country had been marked by great alternations of prosperity and distress, traceable not so much to variations in the real amount of trade as to the over-use and sudden collapse of credit, as represented by the paper currency. A perfectly secure paper currency, payable on demand, would require that no notes should be issued except against the amount of bullion which they represented. In this case it is plain over-issue would be impossible, and the notes merely warrants for the purposes of easier transference and carriage. An over-issue of paper money is the creation of a larger amount of currency than is actually required. The currency therefore, being too plentiful, becomes cheap; and that part of it which has intrinsic value is taken abroad to countries where it can be more advantageously employed. Over-increase of paper currency has a tendency, therefore, to drive bullion out of the country. But, being payable on demand, if the notes are presented for payment while the bullion has been chiefly driven away, a stoppage of their payment inevitably results, and a commercial crisis follows. Transactions in bullion are carried on chiefly through the Bank of England, which is therefore in a position to watch the influx or efflux of the precious metal. Failing, then, a system of perfectly safe issue of paper money against bullion only, it would seem to be desirable that the Bank of England, or some office corresponding to it, should have the sole right of issuing paper money, enlarging or restricting its issues in proportion as the influx or efflux of bullion proved that the whole currency was sufficient or insufficient for the national wants. But this was not and is not the case. Private banks had the right of issuing notes as well as the Bank of England. It is the interest of these private banks to issue notes, because they are thus enabled with a small capital to obtain the advantages of a large discount business. When therefore, for any reason, a demand for money arises in the districts which they serve, they are inclined to go on issuing notes, either ignorant or regardless of the general state of the currency. At times when speculation is very rife, and when rising

Reorganisation
of the Bank
Charter.

Danger of over-
issue of paper
money.

prices induce dealers to buy with the hope of selling again at advantage, these private banks are always ready to advance their paper. But rising prices mean nothing but the cheapening of the currency—that is to say, prices rise because the currency is already too plentiful. The action of the private banks is therefore calculated to increase the evil, and to continue to drive bullion from the country. The attempt to realise the paper issued, which must sooner or later come, discloses the absence of the bullion on which the value of the paper rests, and widespread ruin is the consequence.

In all the great commercial crises these causes and effects can be traced,—in 1792, when nearly 100 banks out of 350 stopped payment; in 1797, when, strengthened by political causes, they drove the Bank of England to suspend cash payments; in 1815 and 1816, when 240 country banks were ruined; in 1825 and 1826, when the loss of the country banks was so great that the issue of about £9,000,000 of additional paper from the Bank of England was necessary to fill the void that had been made; and finally, in 1839, when disasters occurred which were the immediate cause of Peel's determination to seize the opportunity offered in 1844 of reorganising the Bank Charter. He had considerable experience to guide him. In 1826 it had been hoped that the prohibition of small notes, and the permission for the establishment of joint-stock banks, at any distance beyond sixty-five miles from London, would have done something to remedy the evil of recurring crises. They had proved unavailing. They had indeed been worse than useless. The ease with which joint-stock banks were formed had largely increased their number. Upwards of 180 banking offices are said to have been opened in the year 1835–1836; and their competition had gone far in the succeeding years to neutralise the efforts of the Bank of England to keep the currency at its proper level. In America, too, the system of free banking had produced the extraordinary result that all the banks of the Union, without exception, had suspended payment, and some of the State Governments had taken advantage of the crisis to repudiate their debts. It seemed clear that the only reason why England had not suffered in the same way was the unique position of the Bank of England in London, where the greater part of the national business was transacted. It was upon this experience that Peel founded his Bill. Though it would have been impossible to carry a Bill entirely depriving private or joint-stock banks of the right of issue, it was not impossible to restrict their use of it. The establishment of an issue office, upon the principle

*Necessity for
restricting its
issue.*

*The Currency
Bill.
May 1844.*

of issuing against bullion only, would have been a more stringent measure than was necessary; but something like it was desirable. Peel therefore proposed that the ordinary banking business of the Bank of England should be entirely separated from the issue department, and left, as in the case of any other bank, to the discretion of the directors; that the issue department should be allowed to put out notes to the amount of £14,000,000 against securities—£11,000,000 and upwards of these securities being a loan to Government; that any issue beyond this sum should be only allowed against bullion actually in the possession of the Bank. With regard to the most important portion of the paper currency, something closely approaching to absolute security was thus obtained. With regard to private banks, it was proposed that their future issue should be limited to the average amount of the circulation of each during the twelve months preceding the 30th of April 1844, and that no new bank of issue should be established. Thus, not only was the issue restricted, but, as from time to time banks ceased to exist, the centralisation of the system in the hands of the Bank of England became, and still becomes, more perfect.

It was not without considerable opposition that these proposals were formed into a Bill and carried. They have ever since been subject to much criticism. As a matter of fact, on the several occasions when commercial crises have arisen, the limitation of the power of issue imposed by the charter upon the Bank of England has been of necessity broken through. It can therefore be plausibly argued that the restriction is a useless one. It is also urged that there is no necessity for a large reserve, or for keeping up the reserve in time of pressure by a very high rate of discount, because as soon as gold is wanted in England—that is, as soon as it rises in price—it is certain to be immediately supplied from foreign countries; while the difficulties put in the way of obtaining advances from the Bank, just at the very time when a little relaxation would tide over the difficulty till the gold arrived, has the effect of needlessly intensifying the crisis. On the whole, however, the best financial authorities appear to agree that the security given to the Bank by the law of 1844, and the confidence thus engendered, whether reasonable or not, is of the greatest value.

A second great financial measure speaks well for the recovery of trade, and the confidence reposed in the Prime Minister. The price of the funds rose so much above par that the Chancellor of the Exchequer thought it possible to lower the interest of a large proportion of the public debt. He therefore

*Objections to the
Currency Bill.*

*Reduction of
the three and a
half Consols.
March 1844.*

proposed, with the almost unanimous approval of the House, that funds amounting on the whole to £250,000,000, and paying three and a half per cent. per annum interest, should for the next ten years, till October 1854, bear interest at three and a quarter, and after 1854 at three per cent. only. The amount saved would be £625,000 a year, increased after 1854 to an annual saving of £1,250,000. A limit was fixed within which the present holders of this stock might express their dissent to the change, and be paid off. But the repayment of only £247,000 was in fact claimed. The causes for the abundance of capital, which rendered the operation so easy, were probably a revival of trade throughout Europe as well as in England, which induced foreign capital to seek investment here; the renewed vigour and success of our foreign trade; and a disinclination on the part of English capitalists to invest in foreign speculation, especially in America, where the financial catastrophes of late years had much shaken credit.

The credit of the Government would certainly not have been sufficiently good to enable it to carry through this conversion, The Budget, June 1844. had not the Budget of the preceding year proved a success. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised a surplus, and when he introduced his Budget he was able to fulfil this promise. The receipts had during the last year exceeded the estimates under nearly every head. The income-tax did not appear to have lessened the assessed taxes, as had been feared. The customs upon articles of consumption among the poor had increased—a hopeful sign of returning prosperity; and, on the whole, after making due provision for meeting the deficit of the last year, there appeared to be a final surplus of £1,400,000. For the coming year there was an estimated revenue of £51,790,000. The expenditure, after including the payment of those who dissented to the conversion of the three and a half per cent. stock, and certain other extraordinary charges, was estimated at a sum which left a clear surplus of £2,376,900. Mr. Goulburn and his colleagues did not think it advisable to make a very complete use of the surplus in their hands. The produce of the income-tax was a little over £5,000,000. The question as to its continuance was to be considered the following year. If, therefore, they remitted taxes to the full amount of the surplus, even granting a reasonable growth in receipts, the hands of Parliament would have been tied, and the income-tax must of necessity have been renewed. It was therefore proposed only to remit or alter taxes to the amount of £400,000. The Budget was upon the whole well received, though

it was not difficult to see that the income-tax would be continued—a tax as yet very unpopular. But behind the Budget lay proposals, with regard to the sugar duties, which produced much discussion and party warfare.

It will be remembered that the removal of a great part of the duty upon sugar was an item in the Budget of the Whig Changes in the sugar duties. Ministry immediately before their fall in 1841. The gradual advance towards general acceptance of the free-trade theory—that the interests of the consumer are to be considered rather than those of the producer, was shown in the proposals which the Conservative Ministry now made. But as yet they were content with a half measure, and suggested, while considerably lowering the duties upon sugar, the maintenance of a differential duty of 10s. in favour of English colonial produce. There was a second point which it was thought necessary to consider. The suppression of the slave trade and of slavery must, it was supposed, be still forwarded by every possible means. The diminution of the impost was therefore to be confined to such sugar as was the produce of free labour. Hitherto a treaty, by which we were bound to treat Brazil commercially on terms of the most favoured nation, had prevented any measure of this kind. As that treaty was now coming to an end, it was proposed that, while the old duty of 63s. per cwt. was maintained upon slave-grown sugar, the duty upon free-grown sugar should be 34s., the duty upon colonial sugar 24s. the cwt. The subject became of greater importance upon the production of the more sweeping Budget of 1845. On the present occasion the proposal encountered strong opposition from the protectionists on the Government side, who considered the differential duty wholly inadequate; from the free-traders, who desired the entire disappearance of the protective duty; and from those who thought the attempt to discriminate between free and slave-grown sugar injudicious and ineffective—injudicious as at once closing important markets for our own produce, ineffective because, by ourselves taking an enlarged quantity of free sugar, we should leave a want elsewhere which would be supplied by the slave-grown commodity, the quantity of which would therefore be in no wise lessened. In spite of these various lines of opposition, the Budget, with its attendant proposals, was carried. The interest in the discussion lies chiefly in the growing strength of the free-trade party, and still more perhaps in the widening differences between the Government and their own more extreme supporters.

Though not of much historical interest, there is an incident of the session which must be mentioned as still further lowering the popularity of the Home Secretary, already discredited by his unfortunate expression in the debate with regard to the Factory Bill. A petition was presented to the House by the Italian agitator, Mazzini, who had taken refuge in England, and some others, stating that their letters had been habitually detained in the Post Office, opened, and resealed in such a way as to conceal what had been done, and then forwarded to them. Sir James Graham declared that he was legally allowed to give a warrant for the detention and reading of letters in the Office, basing his right upon a statute of Queen Anne, and a subsequent statute of George III. Leaving legal technicalities aside, there could be no doubt that such "espionage" was quite contrary to English feeling, and that the power, if possessed, was not publicly recognised. But the real burden of the charge lay in the suggestion that the letters had been opened not on account of any suspected difficulty in England, but because Mazzini was intriguing in Italy, and that the power claimed by the Home Secretary had been put in exercise at the demand of a foreign Court. Mr. Thomas Duncombe, member for Finsbury, took up the case against the Government, and again and again returned to the attack. Several very long debates were held on the subject. It was elicited that on the warrant of the Home Secretary letters were not unfrequently opened; that such had been the case during the Chartist riots, and in the case of Mazzini; but the secret Committee to which the question was referred, although their report was somewhat doubtful, seemed to acquit the various Secretaries of any misuse of their power. The power itself they regarded as legal, and probably in exceptional cases necessary. Upon this report, in spite of warm and determined assaults, Sir James Graham was able to take his stand, and to defeat all hostile motions.

The financial character which had marked the discussions in Parliament during the last session continued to be even more strongly observable in the year 1845; the gradual conversion of the Prime Minister and his immediate friends to the doctrines of free-trade became still more obvious, and was attended with an increasing mistrust on the part of his Tory supporters. The feeling was not allayed by a corresponding change in the Minister's Irish views. The peculiarity of Peel's mind was its capacity for growth in conjunction with a strong natural tendency towards Conservatism. He does not seem to have been gifted with

Graham accused
of opening
letters.
Aug. 1844.

Characteristics
of Peel's
statesmanship.

foresight beyond the somewhat immediate future. Indeed one source of his power lay in the methodical manner in which, as he himself declared, he thought of one thing only at a time. The effect of these peculiarities, added to a certain want of geniality and openness which prevented him from taking his party thoroughly into his confidence, produced an unfortunate result. It gave him the appearance of duplicity, of accepting the leadership of a party based upon Conservative principles, and of using power thus obtained to advance measures which were not Conservative. He was of that class of statesmen who, after resisting as long as possible, accept and give expression to the ripened wish of the country which they govern. Even in the apparent triumph of his Irish administration, in the imprisonment of O'Connell, he had learned by the facts brought to light and by the astonishing unanimity which the monster meetings displayed, that simple repression, even if possible, was unwise. Already his determination to make some concessions in favour of the Roman Catholic priesthood had deprived him for a time of the services of one of his ablest lieutenants, Mr. Gladstone, who felt himself pledged to the opinions expressed in his book on *Church and State*.

The Prime Minister did not keep the House long in ignorance of the advance in free-trade legislation which his observation of the working of the experiments of the last two years led him to consider advisable. Ten days after the opening of Parliament he explained his financial projects for the coming year. They contained a continuation and development of the plans which he had advocated on entering office. The three years for which the income-tax had been fixed were expiring; the House, he pointed out, must now decide whether it should be continued as he had suggested for a further period of two years, or not. If the income-tax were dropped there would be a deficiency in the revenue, and yet it was the opinion of Ministers that certain additional expenses, especially for the navy, would be necessary. Under these circumstances he should himself advise the continuation of the income-tax. If that proposal was adopted, there would be, after meeting the increased expenditure, a clear surplus of £3,400,000. The application of this surplus was the chief point to consider. In the first place, with regard to the much-contested sugar duties, he proposed a general reduction; but at the same time the maintenance of the differential duty. He then suggested the abolition of all export duties, and also that, of the 813 articles of raw material taxed upon importa-

The Budget.
Feb. 1845.

Retention of
the income-tax.

tion, 430 should be exempt from duty; besides which, he would remove the duty from cotton at a loss to the revenue of not less than £680,000. These, with the remission of the duty on glass, of almost equal value, would make a total remission of taxation to the amount of £3,338,000, within a very little the whole calculated surplus. Of course the scheme was open to criticism on all sides. The income-tax was still to many highly objectionable, and the possibility of its withdrawal seemed to depend upon the success of a principle still somewhat questionable, that the remission of duty would be met by a corresponding increase of trade and wealth, and therefore of revenue. On the other hand, the maintenance of the Corn Laws with the protective duties of the sliding scale, and of the differential duty upon sugar, was contrary to the principles of the free-traders. The whole tone of the Budget, directed to the advantage, as it was asserted, exclusively of the mercantile class, and without relief to the agricultural interests, excited the anger of the ultra-protectionists. Among these, a small number of younger men, such as Lord John Manners, Mr. Smyth, and Mr. Disraeli, their chief spokesman, were beginning to take a leading part, and to express openly their mistrust of the Minister. While Mr. Miles, the acknowledged leader of the agricultural party, gravely pressed the interests of the land, Mr. Disraeli began his bitter assaults upon the Premier, denouncing the Conservative Government as nothing but "an organised hypocrisy." As, however, in spite of the qualified protection still maintained, the tendency of the Budget was evidently towards free-trade, and as the Whig party had now as a whole adopted free-trade principles, Peel secured large majorities. But those majorities were composed chiefly of his political enemies, combined with his more moderate followers, who could not shut their eyes to the extraordinary skill and success of the financial measures already carried out by the Government. Upon the other side, supported by the whole of his own party, and by those of his opponents who had not yet been fully converted, Peel was able to command majorities against the direct free-trade assaults of Mr. Cobden and Mr. Villiers. The Minister was thus to all appearance successful in maintaining the middle part he had chosen, and giving free-trade to the manufacturing interest while still largely protecting the interest of the land. Yet looking on the Budget as a whole it was not difficult to see that his mind was rapidly changing, and that the Corn Laws were principally retained as a means of keeping his party together.

The Budget carried in spite of strong opposition May 1845.

The Premier's relations with his party were no less severely strained when he introduced his Irish measure. In all summaries of Irish complaints, a foremost place had been occupied by the Established Protestant Church of Ireland. Subsequent events have shown that it was only one of many grievances, and that in all probability it was the land question more than the religious question which was really at the bottom of the discontent. But the evil was in the one case obscure, and in the other glaring. Peel had, however, learned to recognise both. The land question was already in the hands of a Commission, at the head of which was Lord Devon, which had been during the last year collecting a vast amount of facts, and which was shortly to produce its report. Meanwhile, pledged both by conviction and by party ties to the maintenance of the Protestant Irish Church, Peel had determined to attempt some alleviation of the evils arising from its monopoly, and to give some substantial assistance to that Church which included the vast majority of the Irish nation. It was too late to attempt what had perhaps once been a feasible project, frequently suggested, but always put aside before Protestant opposition, the extension of State support to the Roman Catholic clergy. The Roman Catholic Church itself was not willing to receive an assistance which would have hampered its independence. But it did not seem impossible to lessen some of the evils arising from the depression in which that Church had been kept, and to give it at all events some share in one of the great advantages of a State Church, the possession of a well-educated body of clergy. There already existed, established by the Acts of the Irish Parliament before the Union, and sanctioned by an Act of the United Parliament in 1808, a College at Maynooth for the purpose of educating Roman Catholics for the priesthood. But the endowment was miserably small. £9000 a year was granted, out of which ten professors, three of them professors of theology, were supported, at a maximum salary of £120 a year, and 250 students receiving £23 each. From this sum the dress, the scanty furniture, and the commons of the students were to be provided. The whole establishment had to be carried on in the most penurious style. The buildings are described as resembling a deserted barracks; the students were packed two or three in a room. But in spite of this a debt had been contracted, and the condition of the place was so bad that twenty-two Roman Catholic prelates had addressed the Lord-Lieutenant upon its deficiencies. Before the close of the last session it had been indicated by the Government that some

Opposition from Peel's own party to his Irish measure. April 1845.

Increase of the Maynooth Endowment. June 1845.

improvement of the educational system in Ireland, including an increased grant to this College, was in contemplation. The idea encountered the bitterest opposition. The Protestants of England, and of the north of Ireland, were up in arms. Churchmen, already viewing with angry terror the Romanising tendencies of the Oxford School, joined with Dissenters in the "No Popery" cry. The Tories, eager for the monopoly of the English Church, added their political objections. Petitions came in on all sides against the intended measure. It is related that when Peel rose in April to ask leave to bring in the Bill, the Speaker called for the petitions against it, and immediately nearly the whole body of Peel's own party rose to present them, amid the laughter of the Opposition. He, however, persisted. Having described the present wretched circumstances of the College, he placed before the House two courses, either the entire repudiation of the grant, trusting the maintenance of the College to voluntary effort, or a considerable addition to the public assistance given it. In words which sounded somewhat strange from his lips, he declared his belief that Ireland was to be won only by concession and kindness, and strongly recommended the adoption of the second course. His definite proposal was to increase the grant to £20,000 a year, with an immediate gift of £20,000 for the purposes of building. Few questions have produced longer or more angry debates. Again, the Young England party, with Disraeli at their head, made themselves prominent. Again, words foreshadowing the coming revolt of Peel's followers were heard in the House, as Disraeli demanded the re-establishment of the proper balance of political parties, the creation of a real and legitimate Opposition, to be secured only "by dethroning the dynasty of deception, by putting an end to the intolerable yoke of Parliamentary imposture." In spite of this opposition, the Bill was carried in the Commons by large majorities, and, on being introduced by Wellington in the Upper House, met with the same success.

It was followed by a broader scheme for the improvement of University education in Ireland. Since the establishment of the National Board of Education in 1831, the elementary education in Ireland had been theoretically organised on the principle of omitting religion from the subjects taught in the schools, and leaving it to the various denominations to supply to their own children the religious instruction they required. During the existence of the so-called Charter schools, which had been established in the year 1733 for the purpose of proselytising, abuses of the most abominable character had arisen; vast sums had

Establishment of
the "Godless"
Colleges.
July 1845.

been squandered upon a few sickly, untaught, and half-clothed children. Nor had other efforts at purely denominational education proved much more successful. But the new system under the National Board had met with rather marked success. At the close of 1844 there were no less than 3153 schools, and the number of children educated in them was nearly 400,000. The National Board had just arranged for the establishment of district model schools for the education of the lower middle-class. Government now proposed to complete the sequence of education by establishing free colleges, one at Cork, one at Galway, and one at Belfast, to be conducted on the same undenominational lines. These colleges, the establishment and endowment of which were estimated to cost £100,000 of capital and an annual sum of £18,000, were to be centres of instruction and not residential colleges, as those of the English universities. The existing University of Dublin, from its close connection with Trinity College, was practically a Protestant university. It was left an open question whether the newly created colleges should be incorporated with this university, or formed into an entirely new one. The proposal to establish the three undenominational colleges encountered warm opposition, not only from the Protestant supporters of Government, but from many of the Roman Catholics themselves, who agreed with their Protestant rivals that education without religion was worse than useless. The proposed colleges were in the course of the debate branded with the name of "Godless," an ill-omened title which clung to them. The Bill was, however, successfully carried through the House. But it has subsequently come to be the general opinion that undenominational education is not precisely fitted to the needs of Ireland. The lengthened rivalry of theological creeds has given to religious teaching an importance in the country which seems to put an obstacle in the way of the success of purely secular education. Even in the elementary schools where the two rival religions have been at all largely represented, it has been found better to establish two separate schools than to attempt any form of combination. The same reason has always rendered the establishment of a united university a matter of great difficulty. Nor can the several efforts which have been made to solve the question be as yet regarded as successful.

The introduction of these measures was not exactly consistent with the policy of the Minister on his accession to power in 1841. The firm suppression of political agitation, and immediate well-considered social reform in the shape of

No attempt
at land
legislation.

a change in the land system, would appear to have been his object upon entering office. If his imprisonment had gone far to thwart O'Connell's policy, the reversal of the verdict against him had been equally destructive to that of Sir Robert Peel. The action of the Ministry had been so far successful that O'Connell had lowered his tone, and the Repeal party, divided by faction, was for the time comparatively quiescent. But Peel felt that Government had been defeated, and had lost that mastery which he regarded as necessary for the proper handling of so difficult a question as the land. Sagacious as he was, and skilled in dealing with a problem immediately before him, he was not a far-seeing statesman. He had therefore, in order to regain his position, adopted measures of political concession, and neglected the more distant advantages which might have come from legislation on the land. But indeed it may well be questioned whether anything he could have done would not now have been too late. The session was scarcely over when information reached the Government of the certain approach of a terrible event which defied all calculation. The potato blight had made its appearance.

In Ireland a failure of the potato crop meant nothing short of famine. The report of the Devon Commission had made it abundantly evident that the land laws as enforced in Ireland had brought a large majority of the population to so low a pitch that anything tending to deprive the people of their habitual means of sustenance must produce ruin. The crime against which the British Parliament had been struggling ever since the Union was at bottom agrarian crime, and the result of extreme misery. Nearly the whole population was dependent upon the land for its support. The landlords were generally absentees, their properties either let to middlemen or worked by agents. The farmers, usually with very small holdings, were tenants at will, and it was the habit of the country that all improvements (and the word includes in Irish land-history the building of residences, cottages, and farm buildings) were carried out by the tenant, who might thus at any time be deprived not only of his holding, but of the capital he had invested in it, for the benefit of his landlord. And those landlords were not only frequently absentees, but the wild and extravagant life of the last generation had in many cases so embarrassed them that their property was virtually in the hands of money-lenders. To such men, to procure the rent at all hazards was the one object, and no inconsiderable part of the tenantry of Ireland was kept constantly

Poverty
revealed by
the Devon
Commission.
Jan. 1845.

under notice to quit, in order either that at every convenient opportunity their rent might be raised under the threat of eviction, or eviction actually carried out for the purpose of obtaining a higher offer, which the keen competition for land would almost certainly produce. Rented far beyond what the land would pay, obliged to spend upon their houses and other improvements the capital which should have been employed in the cultivation of their fields, liable to be suddenly deprived of their homes and their invested capital at their landlords' will, the Irish tenants were in a miserable plight. The land was wretchedly cultivated; and deep indignation, followed by deeds of violence, was not unnaturally felt by every one driven from his farm against the successful competitor who had outbidden him. The Irish tenant farmer thus became not only the enemy of his landlord, but the enemy also of the more successful members of his own class. But the results of these arrangements were not confined to tenant farmers; they passed on to the still more numerous class of labourers. The population of Ireland (about 8,000,000) was probably not larger than the country would bear, had the vast tracts of waste land been reclaimed, and the natural powers of the soil developed. But the want of capital in both landlord and tenant, and the low condition of agriculture produced by the existing system, prevented any large employment of wage-paid labour. It was almost a matter of necessity that the labourer should possess some little corner of land on which to raise food for himself and his family. The impoverished farmer took advantage of this necessity in the same way in which the landlord had taken advantage of him; and the conacre system sprang into existence, by which modicums of land were let to the labourers either by the year or for one or two crops, at rents so high that, while it was scarcely possible for the labourer to pay them, if they were paid they were almost sufficient to cover the farmer's rent to his landlord. Thus for land let to the farmer at £1 per acre, the labourer had to pay at the rate of from £5 to £12, and the few acres thus held produced a total rent which gave the farmer the rest of his land sometimes even as low as a few pence per acre.

The land was thus covered in many districts with tenants and sub-tenants, alike unable to pay their rent and in the last stage of depression. The efforts made to change the system, sometimes undertaken in good faith, with the purpose of relieving the land of a superfluous population, sometimes merely with the object of securing better returns, had only added to the general misery. The system of

Tyranny of the
landlords over
the farmers,

and of the
farmers over
the labourers.

clearances had begun. Landlords were ridding themselves of their small tenants and consolidating their farms. A series of laws passed by the British Parliament had rendered the powers of eviction complete. Absolute masters of their tenantry, the landlords proceeded to turn them out of their little holdings, frequently without any compensation, or any care of what became of those who were thus rendered houseless. The mass of destitution is almost inconceivable, and as the evicted, in their dislike of the new Poor Law, refused to take advantage of the workhouses except in the direst necessity, every town and open estate was crowded with a wretched population, always on the verge of starvation.

The cheapest of all foods is the potato. When successful it yields the largest return per acre. The cottier therefore, or conacre tenant, grew upon the little plot, which was his sole hope of food, nothing but this crop, while the farmer in his turn raised his grain crops for sale or exportation to meet the demands of his landlord, keeping his potato crop for home consumption. It might be supposed that the labourer who could pay such high rent to the farmer might have found it possible to purchase upon emergency some other kind of food, but in fact in very many cases he worked out his rent and received no money. If his potatoes failed he was simply without resource. It is easy then to see how a failure of this crop could produce nothing but famine. In August the blight had appeared in the Isle of Wight and in Kent, and by the middle of September it was forced upon the notice both of Sir Robert Peel and Sir James Graham that the Irish potato crop threatened to be a complete failure. The attention of the Government to the matter was close and anxious. Scientific men were sent to examine the disease in the hope of suggesting some alleviation. Constant reports were sent in, and it gradually became evident that not only would Ireland be practically without food for the greater part of the coming year, but that the seed from diseased stocks would continue to propagate the blight, and that the next crop would also fail.

Sir Robert Peel had been for some time seriously shaken in his belief in protective duties. His experience of the elasticity of the revenue, derived from the success of his late changes in the tariff, inclined him to move further in the same direction; and, as usual with

him, he was beginning to listen to the sustained agitation of which the Anti-Corn-Law League was the mouthpiece. As early as 1836 an association in opposition to the Corn Laws had been formed in London, had circulated tracts, held

Failure of the
potato crop.
Aug. 1845.

History of the
Anti-Corn-Law
League.

meetings, and otherwise advanced the cause. But London had proved unsuited to its exertions, and the headquarters of the agitation had been removed to Manchester, where in 1838 a petition in favour of the repeal of all corn duties had been adopted by a large majority in the Chamber of Commerce. The Corn Law reformers appeared to be undertaking an almost hopeless task. The large majority of Parliament, both Whig and Tory, were connected with the land, yearly motions against the Corn Laws were thrown out by overwhelming majorities, and the opposition of the working men themselves, at that time engaged in their Chartist movements under the leadership of Feargus O'Connor, presented a still further difficulty. But they persisted, and in 1839 changed the Association into the Anti-Corn-Law League, with a regular organisation centred in Manchester. Cobden, Bright, Potter, Wilson, and others carried on the work indefatigably. Twice a day for six years the Council met in Market Street, Manchester, to transact the business of the League. Tracts and pamphlets poured over the country. Lecturers went from town to town and village to village. An enormous hall was erected in Manchester. Lord John Russell's proposal in 1841 for a low fixed duty gave them further encouragement, nor could they doubt, when this plan was rejected, and Sir Robert Peel began his alterations in the tariff, that their arguments were making way. The agitation was redoubled. A vast free-trade bazaar in Manchester in 1842 produced £10,000. A body of Anti-Corn-Law delegates watched the proceedings of Parliament in London. Enormous meetings were held in Drury Lane Theatre, and in the open air at Bedford, Maidstone, and Carlisle. It was determined to rent Covent Garden Theatre for fifty nights, and to raise £100,000, and at length *The Times*, which had constantly opposed the agitation, was compelled to confess that the "League was a great fact." Important adhesions were of frequent occurrence; and, gaining confidence in their success, the League turned its attention towards the next election, strained every effort to get free-trade voters upon the register, and to induce those interested in their cause to invest in 40s. freeholds, and to claim their vote for the county. The pecuniary history of the League was thus strikingly narrated by Mr. Bright: "In the year 1839 we first asked for subscriptions, and £5000 was given. In 1840 we asked for more, and between £7000 and £8000 was subscribed. In 1841 we held the great Conference at Manchester at which upwards of 700 ministers of religion attended. In 1842 we had our great bazaar in Manchester from which £10,000 was real-

ised. In 1843 we asked for £50,000 and got it. In 1844 we called for £100,000, and between £80,000 and £90,000 has been paid in, besides what will be received from the bazaar to be held in May. This year is yet young, but we have not been idle. We have asked our free-trade friends in the northern counties to convert some of their property, so as to be able to defend their right and properties at the hustings. This has been done, and it now appears that, at the recommendation of the Council of the League, our friends in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Yorkshire have invested a sum of not less than £250,000 in the purchase of county qualifications. Besides all this, we shall have our great bazaar in May."

A movement so vigorous, so constantly on the increase, was exactly calculated to influence Sir Robert Peel. To his mind, already wavering, was presented the problem of the approaching famine in Ireland. The distress was not confined to that country; it was visible also in Scotland, and to some degree in England. In other parts of Europe the disease had made its appearance. Belgium, Russia, and Holland had already closed their ports to exportation, with a view of retaining their food supply, and had relaxed for the time the stringency of their import duties. It might seem that the adoption of some such measures were more imperatively called for in Ireland than elsewhere. For side by side with the blighted potato there had grown an unusually large crop of corn of which thousands of quarters were weekly exported to the English market. The rent-paying crop was good, and was sold; the food crop had disappeared. Peel's thoughts were however turned in a different direction. The remedial measure which suggested itself to him was to lower the price of corn by remission of the protective duties. But Peel felt, and felt truly, that to relax the Corn Laws was practically to abolish them. In the first place it was a confession that the arrangements of his sliding-scale failed upon the first pressure; and secondly, in the face of the growing power of the League, a restoration of the duties would be impossible. A Cabinet was summoned on the 1st of November to discuss the question, and there the Prime Minister laid before his colleagues his own view of the matter. It became evident that there were serious differences of opinion, and the Cabinet was adjourned till the 6th. It was then proposed to suspend by Order of Council the duties on importation of grain, to summon Parliament immediately on the 27th to sanction the Order, and to declare the intention of the Government to modify the Corn Law in the next

Peel's conversion to the League.

Opposition of the Cabinet. Nov. 6.

session. Three Ministers only—Lord Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Sidney Herbert—supported these propositions. It might have been better if Peel had at once resigned. He determined however, in the hope that his opponents might change their minds, to await the next Cabinet on the 25th of November. Meanwhile, in concert with Sir James Graham and Mr. Goulburn, he authorised a very large purchase of Indian corn for the temporary supply of the immediate wants of Ireland. The energetic measures which he had contemplated were allowed to sleep.

The unusual brief activity of the Cabinet, followed by some weeks of inaction, was interpreted rightly by the leader of the Opposition, Lord John Russell, then in Edinburgh; and on the 22d of November he published a famous letter to his constituents in London confessing that he was a convert to free-trade. He declared that "the struggle to make bread scarce and dear, when it is clear that part at least of the additional price goes to increase rent, is a struggle deeply injurious to an aristocracy which (this quarrel once removed) is strong in property, strong in the construction of our legislature, strong in opinion, strong in ancient associations, and the memory of immortal services. . . . Let us then unite," he continued, "and put an end to a system which has been proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter divisions among classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality, and crime among the people." It was plain therefore that the Whig party was determined to support an entire abolition of the Corn Laws.

Russell's manifesto on free-trade.

At the next Cabinet, Peel adhered to the views he had lately announced. Several discussions took place. It appeared that the greater part of his colleagues were either convinced by his arguments, or, as in the case of the Duke of Wellington, regarded the maintenance of the Conservative party as all-important, but that Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch refused to support him. Determined not to undertake so important a question, and one which implied so grave a change of opinion on his own part, with a weakened and divided Cabinet, Sir Robert Peel thought it better to resign, and leave the repeal of the Corn Laws to be carried out by his Whig opponents. Lord John Russell was summoned to form a Ministry. He believed that he had succeeded, when the objections of Lord Grey to serve if Lord Palmerston was given the Foreign Office broke up his combinations, and compelled him to decline the duty of forming a Government.

Peel resigns. Dec. 5, 1845.

Russell fails to form a Ministry.

There remained no alternative but to bring into office either the Conservatives or the Radical free-traders. It might have been possible for a Conservative Government to have been formed upon the grounds of protection, with Lord Stanley at its head. The Queen did not send for Lord Stanley, but Peel appears to have ascertained that none of his former colleagues would undertake the duties of Premier. The choice lay between himself and the Radicals. It was almost impossible to hesitate, and Peel consented to resume office on the clear understanding that he intended to propose free-trade.

There seemed every likelihood that the Prime Minister was returning to office with unexampled power. There seemed no probability of a strongly organised opposition. Though the Tories might differ from their chief on the great point at issue, they had felt so deeply injured by Lord John Russell's letter that there was little likelihood of their joining him in opposition. Such members of the Cabinet as still clung to protection had, by the mere act of taking office, deprived themselves of the power of vindicating their opinions strongly. Thus the Premier might have expected the support of his old partisans, though grudgingly given, and the full approbation of the Whigs and free-trade Liberals upon the point on which his mind was fixed. But the session, which promised to be so peaceful, proved to be one of the most tumultuous and eventful on record. Lord George Bentinck,

Peel returns to office. Dec. 20.

a man who had been eighteen years in Parliament without making an important speech, but who was gifted with much courage and with considerable ability, especially for figures (an ability probably increased by his large dealings on the turf), appeared suddenly as the leader of a new party, the protectionists. At his elbow was Disraeli, who now found that opportunity for which he had long waited of taking a prominent part in Parliamentary warfare. He was too much of an adventurer to be recognised by the important country gentlemen as their chief. But while the noble birth, good presence, and high courage of Bentinck made him admirable as a leader of an aristocratic Opposition, the fire, the venom, and the acute Parliamentary tactics were supplied by his less distinguished henchman.

The speech from the throne indicated the introduction of further removal of protective duties, words which were well understood to mean the repeal of the Corn Laws. Sir Robert Peel in fact intended to effect their repeal in such a manner that it should be a part of the general system of free-trade, avoiding the appearance of a direct assault upon the agricultural interest.

Queen's Speech. Jan. 22, 1846.

The allusions in the speech were interpreted by the mover of the Address, and still further by the Prime Minister, while explaining his conduct in the late crisis. The leader of the Opposition followed his example, and explained the part he had himself played. A bitter speech of Disraeli, reviewing the conduct of the Prime Minister, likening it in its treachery to that of the Turkish Pasha who, when sent out with a fleet against Mehemet Ali, had joined him with all his ships—showed the temper which Sir Robert Peel's conduct had roused in his former friends, and fitly began the struggle which was to occupy the greater part of the session. The Address was, however, carried in both Houses without a division.

The ground was thus left clear for Sir Robert Peel to explain at length, on the 27th of January, the financial measures which he contemplated. He rested his action, firstly, on the abstract principle that protective duties are in themselves injurious, and can be defended only on some special ground of national interest or individual justice; and, secondly, on the actual experience of the last three years. During that time he had largely modified the tariff, and remitted nearly all duties upon raw materials. The remission had been successful; there had been an increase in production and in the revenue, a greater demand for labour, more comfort and peace among the people. In this course he meant to continue. On the remaining raw materials, which were only two, tallow and timber, he intended to make a considerable reduction, and to extend the same principle to manufactured goods and to corn. All duties on the coarser articles of wool, linen, and cotton manufacture were to be withdrawn, those on finer quality reduced, and on silk (the favourite subject of the illicit traffic of the smuggler) the duty was to be reduced from 30 to 15 per cent. A large number of other articles were to be subjected to the same process. The exhortation which the Prime Minister addressed to the manufacturers to throw no obstacle in the way of these changes, though they might seem to affect their interests, was, no doubt, rather illusory; they were chiefly free-traders, and not likely to oppose measures carrying with them the removal of the Corn Laws. It was in this that the importance of the change really lay. Determined to repeal those laws, the Prime Minister did not, however, think it advisable to do so at once. He proposed that in February 1849, oats, barley, rye, and wheat should be admitted at a merely nominal duty, and that during the interval there should be a continuation of a sliding-scale, falling from 10s. when wheat was under

Peel's financial proposals.

Proposed Repeal of the Corn Laws.

48s. a quarter to an invariable duty of 4s. when the price reached 54s. He attempted to sweeten the bitterness of the proposition by the removal of certain burdens upon land. A change in the law of settlement, to prevent the manufacturing districts from sending back paupers to the place of their settlement in times of manufacturing depression, a concentration of parishes for the management of highways, and certain facilities for borrowing from the Government for agricultural improvements, were the advantages offered. In addition to this, the maintenance of prisoners, the expense of prosecutions, and the payment of workhouse schoolmasters were to be transferred from the counties to the State. The amount of money relief was calculated at about £250,000. In Ireland, the expenses of the constabulary, which were about £180,000, were in like manner to be transferred to the Treasury. His suggestions in fact showed that, alarmed at the Irish famine, and construing the late disturbances in England in the light thrown on them by that famine, he had become completely converted to the fundamental doctrine of free-trade, that the interests of the consumer should take precedence of those of the producer.

By the standing orders of the House of Commons, every Bill affecting the trade or religion of the country has to be founded on a preliminary resolution of the whole House in Committee. Very abundant scope was therefore given for prolonged opposition to the Government measures. On the motion that the House should go into Committee on the resolutions, the battle began. Mr. Miles, assuming for the time the leadership of the protectionists, moved the postponement of the Committee to that day six months. The protectionists had had time to organise themselves, taking as their centre a society which had been founded in opposition to the Anti-Corn-Law League. The real leaders were Lord George Bentinck and Disraeli; and such life had they infused into a party which had suffered under the disadvantage of being deserted by those to whom it had hitherto looked for guidance, that the debate was kept up for twelve days, during which 103 members spoke; and, though the Government was supported by the whole strength of the Opposition, in addition to such Conservatives as had followed Peel, the amendment was only rejected by a majority of 97. Between the 6th and the 20th of March the separate resolutions on which the Government Bills were to be founded were introduced. They were all bitterly opposed by Lord George Bentinck. As in turn stockings, silk, hops, timber, came before the House, he steadily fought the battle of

Virulent opposition of the protectionists.

the protectionists. The resolutions were, however, ultimately passed, and on the 23d of March the second reading of the Bill for the repeal of the Corn Laws was moved. Again there was a great struggle. Again the attacks upon the Prime Minister were of a very virulent kind; but again, though with a somewhat decreased majority, the Government was victorious. This was on the 27th of March.

Second reading of the Corn Bill.
March 27.

But meanwhile an event was happening which was destined to throw the successful progress of Government into confusion, and ultimately to lead to its removal from office. The famine in Ireland and the misery which accompanied it had almost inevitably produced an increase of crime, and while busied in the Lower House with the financial measures which they perhaps unwisely regarded as likely to remove the pressure of famine, the Ministers had thought it necessary to introduce in the Upper House a stringent measure of coercion. Lord St. Germans, in introducing the Bill, had gone through the statistics of crime in Ireland. He had shown that what might be called exceptional crimes, including murders, violent assaults, firing into houses, threatening letters, and administering secret oaths, had risen during the last year from 1495 to 3462. They had been chiefly directed against men of comparatively low social standing, small farmers, tenants, and labourers, and as the Government connected them with the existence of secret societies, and as they had been chiefly committed in the night-time, the most important enactment of the Bill (which subsequently gave it the name of the Curfew Act) was that which conferred on the executive Government the power in proclaimed districts of forbidding persons to be out of their dwellings between sunset and sunrise. The right of proclaiming a district as a disturbed district was placed in the hands of the Lord-Lieutenant, who might station additional constabulary there, the whole expense of which was to be borne by the district. The disorders in Ireland were so terrible and so obvious, that Whigs and Conservatives in the Upper House combined in approbation of the Bill, and it was passed without difficulty.

Irish Coercion Bill carried in the Lords.

Although Sir Robert Peel was well aware that the Irish in the Lower House were prepared to offer prolonged opposition to the Bill, he believed—misled by its reception in the Upper House—that the support of Whigs and Conservatives combined would be given to him, and that he would find it a comparatively easy matter to pass the Bill recommended in the

Opposition to it in the Commons.

Queen's Speech and already somewhat unduly delayed. Immediately that the second reading of the Corn Bill had been accepted he therefore, through Sir James Graham, introduced the Coercion Bill. He expected, no doubt, to have been able to get it through the House, in some of its more important stages at all events, before the Easter recess, and, thinking it a matter of great importance, was willing to postpone the completion of the Corn Bill, of which he now felt tolerably sure, for the short time which might be necessary. It was a fatal miscalculation. He was in the awkward predicament of having but a very small body of personal followers, and of being able to secure majorities only by the support of the various sections of his opponents, and this support could only be secured upon conditions. The protectionists were willing and eager to vote for the Coercion Act, if it was given precedence to everything else, and was hurried forward as a matter of extreme urgency. The Whigs and free-traders were upon the same terms willing to vote for the Corn Bill, but were determined to oppose the Coercion Act unless their favourite measure

Deadlock caused by the attempt to pass both Bills together.

was allowed to be at once completed. It was out of the power of the Government, when once the Coercion Act had been introduced, to fulfil the conditions of either one party or the other. It only let free the flood of Irish eloquence, and gave room for that policy of obstruction which had already been conceived. Rapidity was out of the question; for while Bentinck and his followers clamoured for the postponement of the Corn Bill, the Whigs in order to secure its precedence supported the obstruction of the Irish by every means in their power. The Easter recess arrived, and the Coercion Bill had not yet passed its first reading. Nay, more, a whole week after the recess went by without either Bill being advanced a step. Nor was it till the 1st of May (or rather at two o'clock on the 2d) that the division on the first reading of the Coercion Bill took place, and the Government carried it by a majority of 274 against 125. This however broke up the deadlock. The Corn Bill again came forward for discussion, and finally, after another long and very hot debate, late at night on the 15th of May, the third reading was carried by a majority of 98.

On the 28th of May the House of Lords, from whom much opposition had been expected, consented to follow the lead of the Duke of Wellington, and passed the second reading by a considerable majority. This rendered the final success of the measure certain; the protectionists could no longer hope to resist it. As Disraeli himself writes:

"Vengeance therefore had succeeded in most breasts to the more sanguine sentiment; the field was lost; but at any rate there should be retribution upon those who had betrayed it." By hook or by crook some means were to be found to drive from office the great Minister who had offended the country gentlemen, and who had ventured to risk his whole political life in acting according to the dictates of his conscience. He had been guilty of the high crime of possessing a mind capable of growth and of learning the lessons of experience. With want of foresight, and of that power of leading opinion which is the note of the highest statesmanship, he may justly be charged. Of the credit of self-denying patriotism, in the honest declaration of a changed opinion, though it led to his own ruin, he can scarcely be deprived. The means of carrying out the contemplated vengeance were not at first obvious. In order to effect it some point of union between the Protectionists and the Whigs had to be found. There seemed much possibility of the two parties uniting in supporting a fixed duty on corn which several of the Whig leaders still preferred to free-trade, but Lord John Russell felt himself compromised by his Edinburgh letter in which he had declared his change of opinion, and which he thought precluded him from falling back upon the old Whig nostrum. It was possible that when the much-vexed question of the sugar duties came on, a combined attack on differential duties in favour of free-grown sugar might have been made. But Bentinck consistently declared that he could not consent to give up his support of British capital, however invested. There remained the Coercion Bill. But as both Russell and Bentinck had supported the first reading it was difficult to see how it could be used as a means of ejecting the Ministry. Russell, eager for party success, and not without a reasonable feeling that the newly converted free-traders were robbing the Liberal party of its natural rewards, found a way out of his difficulty in the remarks he had made when supporting the Bill. He had then said there was much he disapproved of in it, and he could now, as he thought, without inconsistency vote against it unless it were accompanied by healing political measures. Bentinck was driven to a more doubtful shift. He had declared that he voted for it on account of its extreme urgency, and had supported the Government on the belief that they intended to press it quickly through the House; in other words, as long as it could be used to postpone the passing of the Corn Bill. But several weeks had now passed over; the Corn Bill had been carried, the Whitsun holidays

Vengeance of the Protectionists.

They join the Liberals against the Coercion Bill.

Third Reading of the Corn Bill. May 15.

had intervened, and nothing had been done to forward it. He therefore thought himself justified in declaring that the Government had either ceased to consider it urgent, or had basely neglected their chief duty of keeping order. It was to a House almost entirely hostile that the Coercion Bill was presented for a second reading on the 9th of June. The fate was a foregone conclusion; it was debated warmly and at great length, but an amendment moved by Sir W. Somerville that the Bill be read a second time that day six months was upon a division carried by a majority of seventy-three on the 25th of June.

Coercion Bill
thrown out.
June 25.

The resignation of the Ministry was a necessary consequence. Having fulfilled his great object, it was probably not without a considerable sense of relief that Sir Robert Peel, who had suffered much from the breach of party ties, and the violent assaults at the hands of his former friends to which he had been subjected, threw up the reins of Government. His resignation was not inglorious. On the very day of his defeat the third reading of the Corn Bill passed the House of Lords, and on the day on which he had to announce the dissolution of the Government, news arrived that the quarrel with the United States with regard to Oregon had ended in the acceptance of the English proposals without the alteration of a word.

Sir Robert Peel had come into office as a financier. His success had consisted in the restoration of the financial affairs of the country; his fall had followed upon the complete exposition of his most mature financial views. The history of his Ministry had of necessity been chiefly a financial history, or where not strictly financial had been engaged upon those social and economic events which are closely connected with finance. The extent to which commercial enterprise had been restored is illustrated by the furious speculation in 1845 which is known as the Railway Mania. The introduction of railways afforded a new opening for the investment of capital; the success which appeared likely to attend them gave birth to a wild outburst of speculation. Unpaid-up stocks and shares in railways, not only unbuilt but not yet authorised by Act of Parliament, freely changed hands, and were purchased largely upon account by men without means, to be sold again upon the first turn of the market. Paper fortunes were rapidly amassed, to be afterwards as rapidly lost when the hollowness of the schemes on which they rested was discovered. In these speculations many indiscreet but *bona fide* purchasers were

The Ministry
resign.
June 29, 1846.

Peel's financial
success.

The Railway
Mania.

necessarily involved, and the loss and distress were considerable. The number of schemes, even of a genuine character, was very large; and the scene at the Railway Board on the last day of receiving plans to be laid before Parliament calls to mind some of the incidents of the South Sea Bubble. Before twelve o'clock the hall was choked with eager claimants for attention, each with his plan and specification. The crush was somewhat allayed by the information that all schemes brought before midnight should be duly attended to. But even after that hour projectors arrived in hot haste, flung their plans into the house, only to have them thrown back again into the street. As it was, nearly 800 schemes were duly registered. It is calculated that, besides the deposit paid, the liabilities of railways on their borrowed capital, on expenses already incurred, and on the expenses calculated in the new plans, amounted to little short of £600,000,000. To make the projects as genuine as possible it had been determined that a considerable deposit should be lodged with the Accountant-General, and so large was the amount required, that very serious fear, fortunately groundless, was entertained among commercial men that a money crisis would occur on the withdrawal, even for the few days, of so much of the currency.

But although in its main lines financial, the five years during which Peel had held office had brought with them the usual crop of foreign difficulties. An empire so wide-spread as England, and touching foreign nations on so many points, can scarcely be free from such complications. In India, with America and with France our interests had been seriously involved.

The events following immediately upon the Afghan war, and the success of Lord Ellenborough against Sindh have already been narrated. The conduct of the Governor-General, though approved by the Ministry and lauded by the Duke of Wellington, was distasteful to the Directors of the Company. The mixed character of the Government of India was well suited to produce such a result. The wars in which the country had been involved, and the ostentatious conduct of the Governor-General, emphasised by the unwise proclamations which had closed the Afghan war, had so displeased the Directors that they made an almost unexampled use of the power vested in them, and recalled Lord Ellenborough without producing any definite charges against him. Their legal right was so clear that the Government, in spite of its strong disapprobation, could not avoid

Scene at the
Board of Trade.
Nov. 30, 1845.

Foreign affairs.

Difficulty in
India.

Recall of
Ellenborough.
May 1846.

ratifying their action. Sir Henry Hardinge, a soldier of some celebrity, and a member of the Government, went out to take his place. Lord Ellenborough may have been to blame in the warlike character of his Government, but Sir Henry Hardinge found himself soon compelled to follow in his footsteps.

The death of Runjeet Singh, the faithful friend of the English, had left his dominions in a state of much confusion, which was still further increased after the death of his successor, Shere Singh, and became so threatening that precautionary measures on the British frontier were necessary. At the end of 1845 the throne was occupied by a boy, Duleep Singh, under the care of the Ranee or Queen-mother. But he ruled in constant terror of a mutinous army and its restless and powerful commanders. Either, as was alleged, under the pressure of the army, or for the politic purpose of giving it employment, the Sikh Government made preparations to invade the British territory. Though repeated demands for explanations remained unanswered, Hardinge, anxious to avoid war and eager for the establishment of a strong Sikh Government, did not immediately march troops to the frontier, but repaired thither himself, ostensibly for the purpose of visiting certain protected States lying on the eastern side of the Sutlej. He was unwilling to believe that an invasion would really take place, and thought that the advanced posts of Ferozepore and Loodiana could hold out against any sudden assault. It was not till the Sikh troops had actually crossed the river with their artillery that the English forces were summoned from Umballah and from Loodiana. The Sikh army, under Tej Singh, having crossed the Sutlej and invested Ferozepore, advanced to the villages of Ferozeshah and Moodkee. It

*Battle of
Moodkee.
Dec. 18, 1845.*

was here that, after a rapid march, the troops under Sir Hugh Gough, Commander-in-Chief, first came upon the enemy. The Sikh army was entirely routed, with the loss of seventeen pieces of cannon. Three days later, Sir Hugh Gough having effected a junction with the garrison of Ferozepore, under Sir John Littler, advanced against the fortified camp of the enemy at Ferozeshah. Again, after very heavy fighting, victory declared for the English. Sir Henry Hardinge estimated the British forces at 16,700 men, and 69 guns, the Sikhs numbered between 48,000 and 60,000 men, and 108 heavy pieces of cannon. The victories were not won without considerable loss. Sir Robert Sale of Jellalabad and Major Broadfoot, one of the most distinguished of the political agents of the North-West, were among the killed. These two victories

necessitated the retreat of the Sikh army, which repassed the river. The Governor-General had, during these operations, put himself under the command of Sir Hugh Gough, and shared with him the honour of the victories. But the campaign was not yet over. The Sikhs did not yet abandon their design, and, finding themselves pressed for provisions, passed a large body of troops across the river, and moved towards Loodiana. To support the little garrison under Brigadier Godby, Sir Harry Smith was despatched. By able manœuvring he succeeded in effecting his communication with Loodiana, and on the 28th of January moved forward to the attack of the enemy, who had drawn up along a ridge near the village of Aliwal. The victory was complete; 52 pieces of artillery fell into the hands of the English, making a total of 143 since the beginning of the campaign. The left bank of the Sutlej was now clear of the enemy, except that they held a strongly fortified camp at Sobraon, covering a bridge across the river. It was determined to carry this by storm, and, Smith having rejoined the Commander-in-Chief on the 10th of February, the attack upon the formidable position began. The Sikhs, who were very strong in artillery, offered a desperate resistance; but at length the English, pressing them on every side, drove them in masses on to their bridge and into the river, which had suddenly risen seven inches behind them. The slaughter upon the bridge, and in the flooded fords, was terrible, and the victory again complete. The course of the English arms had indeed been strikingly glorious, and closed with a battle which the Governor-General described "as an exploit one of the most daring ever achieved, by which in open day a triple line of breastworks, flanked by formidable redoubts, bristling with artillery, manned by thirty-two regular regiments of infantry, was assaulted and carried." On the very evening of the day of battle the passage of the army began, and by the 24th the whole of the troops were within thirty-two miles of Lahore. There Sir Henry Hardinge received the submission of the Sikh Government, and dictated the terms of peace. He required the surrender of the territory lying between the Sutlej and the Beas rivers, the payment of a war indemnity, the disbanding of the Sikh army, and its restoration to the same form and numbers as during the reign of Runjeet Singh, the surrender of all guns which had been used against us, and the entire control of both banks of the Sutlej river. The young Maharajah was replaced on the throne under the regency of his mother. Some English troops were left in the

*Battle of
Aliwal.
Jan. 28, 1846.*

*Battle of
Sobraon.
Feb. 10, 1846.*

country, and an English Resident appointed; but it was distinctly stated that the internal government should be left entirely to the Sikhs themselves. Sir Henry Hardinge determined to give them an opportunity of saving the nation from military anarchy and misrule; but at the same time he let it be clearly understood that if the opportunity was lost the Government of India would have to make other arrangements. The Queen Regent was unwise in the choice of a Minister. She selected Lal Singh, her paramour. Selfish and vicious, he was quite unable to carry out the required reforms, which implied the disbanding of much of the old army, and the resumption of many grants which had been made to prominent and anarchical chiefs. The English felt that they were upholding by their arms a thoroughly bad governor. Sufficient cause for removing him was before long found. Cashmere, one of the outlying provinces of the Sikh empire, which had been ceded to the English to cover war expenses, had been by them given or sold to Golab Singh, who in the late disturbances had consistently urged the maintenance of the English Alliance. But the chief in actual occupation as Governor for the Sikh Government refused to carry out this arrangement. It was proved that in so refusing he was acting at the instigation of Lal Singh. So clear a proof of the duplicity of this Minister necessitated his removal and the appointment of an English Resident, with a sufficient staff of subordinates, to whom the widest powers of supervision and administration were intrusted. The officer selected for this responsible place was Henry Lawrence, who at once set to work to introduce reforms into every branch of the government, ably supported by a little band of officials most of whom became subsequently well known in Indian history. For some years all seemed to promise well, and it was in the belief that, though his first attempt at introducing self-government had failed, he had succeeded in rendering the British rule of incalculable advantage to the people of the Punjab, that Lord Hardinge withdrew from the Lord Lieutenancy.

The Ashburton Treaty in 1842 had settled the questions as to the frontier on the north-east of the United States satisfactorily, and although there were not wanting some who considered that the English Government had carried their conciliatory temper somewhat too far, the nation as a whole was pleased at the peaceful solution. But there was still a district in the extreme west where the frontier between the two countries was quite indefinite. The rapid development of the States rendered it necessary that some fixed line should be drawn beyond the Rocky Mountains

Difficulty on
the Canadian
Frontier.

as well as to the foot of them. Thus far the fourteenth parallel had been accepted by both parties as a satisfactory frontier in 1818. The country beyond, known as Oregon, was not at that time sufficiently in the occupation of either country to be included in the arrangement, and a convention was made securing the right of joint occupation to both English and American citizens. In 1827, when the question again arose, such difficulties were found to exist in the way of a final settlement, that it was thought better to continue the existing convention by a treaty terminable at a year's notice given by either of the governments concerned. As population increased and the territory became of more importance, such an indefinite arrangement became undesirable, and the attention of Lord Aberdeen had been directed, ever since the conclusion of the Ashburton Treaty, to the settlement of this further question. With a people so self-asserting as the Americans, and upon a point so beset with conflicting rights, it was not easy to deal. But the President, Mr. Tyler, had shown himself disposed to act in a friendly manner, and there had appeared, in 1845, as Lord Aberdeen declared in the House, a fair hope of avoiding war, and of closing the question by amicable compromise. But in that year a new President, Mr. Polk, came into office, a representative of the Democrats, and bound to show his sympathy with the somewhat encroaching and self-asserting character of the great party which had elected him. Within a fortnight of the encouraging declaration of Aberdeen, the inaugural address of the President was issued, containing an uncompromising assertion of the rights of the United States to the whole of the disputed territory. The warlike tone of this address, and of the expressions of public opinion which followed it, roused a corresponding feeling in England, and it was in the midst of enthusiastic cheers from all parts of the House that Peel explained that since the accession of the new President, nothing having been heard of the negotiation which he was now inclined to regard as hopeless, Government was resolved and prepared, after exhausting all efforts for peace, to maintain its rights. There is little doubt that the prospect of war with America had much to do with the more conciliatory attitude towards Ireland adopted at this time by the Prime Minister. He felt how great a source of weakness Ireland would prove if dissatisfied and upon the verge of rebellion. There was for the moment real danger of a war. But in spite of frequent heart-burnings, there is always at the bottom the strongest disinclination both in America and England to press matters to extremity. It is felt that a war between

Danger of war
with America.
1845.

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nations so closely allied in origin, in language, and in manners, would of necessity have much of the character and involve many of the horrors of a civil war. Although the language of the Democratic party in the House of representatives continued to be angry and vehement, a cooler temper showed itself in the Senate, and, after much discussion, resolutions were arrived at and passed, which appeared to open the door to fresh negotiation. Aberdeen at once seized the opportunity, and before Peel's ministry was driven from office he was enabled to announce that a successful compromise had been arrived at. The point at issue had been the possession of Vancouver's Island and the inlets and islands immediately opposite to it. The continuation of the forty-ninth parallel would have deprived us of these districts, which, by every claim which can be raised to newly settled country were legitimately ours. The Americans, not uninfluenced perhaps by the evident approach of a war with Mexico, consented at length to accept the forty-ninth parallel as the frontier as far as the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island. The boundary then followed that channel down to the Pacific. At the same time the navigation of the northern branch of the Columbia river, and of the river itself from its bifurcation to the sea, was made equally free to the citizens of both countries. The patience of the English Government, its firmness when negotiations were broken off, its readiness to renew them upon the first opportunity, deserved the marked success it had secured.

From the time of the Reform Bill a close friendship with France had been regarded as the necessary policy of England. The establishment of the Orleans dynasty had at the time largely influenced the course of English politics, and it was supposed that the two constitutional countries of the west formed the natural counter-weight to the great absolute empires on the east of Europe. Louis Philippe shared in this view, but it was by no means thoroughly accepted by the French nation. The King, a man of astute mind, who, though his rule followed constitutional forms, was strongly disposed to rule as well as to reign, found it difficult to pursue a straightforward course. Though succeeding when the critical time arrived in maintaining the English alliance, he was on several occasions obliged to countenance ministers whose views were of a far less friendly character. As early as the year 1835 the English Government had found that the *entente cordiale* existed more in words than in reality; and in the East, so opposed had been the interests of the

Peaceful settlement of the Frontier. July 1846.

Difficulty with France.

two countries, that it was only under the pressure of the treaty of July 1840, into which the great Powers had entered without the co-operation of France, that the French Government had unwillingly accepted the settlement of the Egyptian question. In all probability it was the influence of the King himself which had alone prevented open hostility. The Guizot-Soult ministry, which had succeeded to the more warlike ministry of Thiers, though avowedly established for the purpose of maintaining the alliance, was strongly infected with the desire then prevalent in the country to act an independent part, and win back for France a preponderance in European politics.

While Palmerston was at the head of foreign affairs there was little chance that the estrangement between the two Courts would be allayed. He was without fear, and did not hide his fearlessness. He had been the author of the treaty of July, which had been a severe blow to the pride of the French. He mistrusted the genuineness of the French professions of friendship. He disliked Guizot, and was the uncompromising adherent of what he considered English interests.

The accession of the Conservatives, though the objects of national policy were not avowedly changed, introduced a change in conduct; so much so that both publicly in his speeches and in his private letters, Palmerston thought himself justified in charging the Government with a readiness to sacrifice English interests for the purpose of maintaining friendly foreign Ministers in power. He instanced the acquiescence, on the part of the English Government, with the French acceptance of the protectorate of Tahiti. It had been twice offered to England and twice refused, but with the assurance that Queen Pomare might rely on English assistance against the interference of any other Power. None the less England had looked on calmly when Pomare was compelled, under severe pressure, to place her dominions under the French protectorate. But if the Conservative Government was at any time open to this charge, events took place in the island in 1844 which drove it to a firm and successful assertion of the power of England. Smarting under French encroachment, Pomare had ventured upon some acts of independence, trivial enough in themselves, but which the French attributed to the interference of the English Consul, Mr. Pritchard. A French ship of war appeared before the island. In spite of his consular immunities Mr. Pritchard was arrested, and the admiral proceeded to annex the island. This was more than the English Government could put up with. It demanded and obtained a disavowal on

Hostile feelings aggravated by Palmerston.

Collision with France in Tahiti. March 1844.

the part of the French of the action of their admiral, and ultimately, though with great difficulty and against a resistance pushed almost to the verge of war, obtained a sort of apology and a promise of a money indemnity for the injured Consul.

But it was in Spain that the covert hostility of the two nations was chiefly displayed. The establishment of the constitutional throne had been the joint work of the French and English. But the cessation of the war against the Carlists had been followed by factious and party struggles among the Constitutionalists themselves, scarcely less disastrous and anarchical. Two great parties, the Moderados and the Progressistas, disputed the Government, and had found support respectively in the Governments of France and England. The interests of Lord Palmerston and of Mr. Villiers, subsequently Lord Clarendon, the English Minister at Madrid, were decidedly with the Progressistas. As decidedly did the French Minister support their opponents. In 1840 General Espartero, the Progressista leader, secured the success of his party, and Christina, the Queen-mother, was compelled to withdraw. The young Queen Isabella and the Government fell into the General's hands, and he was made Regent. But only two years later an insurrection, which the French almost openly supported, put an end to his reign. Christina had found a supporter in General Narvaez, a man of cruel and absolute character. With his assistance she returned, the constitution was again reformed in a less liberal direction, and a law which had rendered the consent of the Cortes necessary for the Queen's marriage was repealed. French interest seemed thus for a while paramount at Madrid, and the obstacle withdrawn which had hitherto stood in the way of some matrimonial arrangements which the French Court had had in view for the purpose of rendering its predominance permanent.

As early as 1840 the question of the marriage of the Spanish Queen had become a subject of interest, both to the French and English governments. The first suggestion, which came from the side of Spain, was a marriage between Queen Isabella and the Duc d'Aumale, Louis Philippe's fourth son. The French King and his Minister saw that it was out of the question that England should allow Spain to fall directly into French hands. They therefore rejected the suggestion, but taking credit for this concession, attempted to obtain the consent of Lord Aberdeen to a stipulation confining the choice to members of the Bourbon house, descendants of Philip V. So unjust and unnatural a limitation

Rivalry with
France in
Spain.

Suitors for the
Spanish Queen.

on the free choice of an independent Queen should have met with instant rejection. But Aberdeen, eagerly bent on supporting the *entente cordiale* with France, contented himself with taking up a position of complete neutrality, and, while asserting that the Queen's choice ought to be free, implied that England would make no opposition to a Bourbon marriage if it in no way threatened the balance of power. The pretension of the French Court to lay this restriction on the Spanish Queen was rendered particularly irksome by the limited choice afforded by the condition of the Bourbon house. It was impossible to suppose that the sons of Don Carlos, so lately in war against the constitutional monarchy, could be agreeable suitors; they were in fact regarded as out of the question. The late King's brother, Don Francisco de Paula, had two sons, Francisco d'Assis, Duke of Cadiz, and Enrique, Duke of Seville; but of these the elder was on every ground quite unfit to become the Queen's husband, and the younger was a man of wild and undisciplined character. There remained Count Trapani, the younger brother of Christina, a member of the Neapolitan Bourbon house; and although he was under the disadvantage of being a Neapolitan, and therefore unpopular and despised by the Spanish people, he seemed to be the least objectionable of the suitors. It appears to have been agreed between Guizot and Aberdeen to favour his suit, and with this intention Bulwer was sent as Minister from England and Bresson from France. But although the Courts at home desired to act in agreement, it soon became evident that neither Bulwer nor Bresson were inclined to allow the rivalry of the English and French parties in Spain to be thus obliterated. While Bresson, who appears to have been a man of haughty and unscrupulous character, boasted openly of the triumph of French influence, Bulwer waited quietly till the overbearing manner of his adversary should alienate his adherents, and frustrate the attempt to force Trapani on the Queen.

It was just at this time in 1845 that Bulwer, while passing through Paris, was first informed of the intention of Louis Philippe to marry the Duke of Montpensier, his second son, to the Infanta, Queen Isabella's sister; and in the autumn of the same year, on the occasion of a friendly visit of the English Queen to the French Court at En, the same plan was talked over. Guizot and Aberdeen had an opportunity of a personal explanation, and the French minister reaffirmed what he had already intimated to Bulwer, that though the French were desirous that both princesses should marry Bourbons, there was no

French
proposals for
the Infanta's
marriage.
Sept. 1845.

intention of arriving indirectly at the Spanish throne through the marriage of the Infanta. He added that Christina had already assented to that marriage, but that it should not take place till there was a direct heir to the Spanish throne. Louis Philippe also personally assured the Queen that this was the case, using the words, "that he never would hear of this marriage until it was no longer a political question, which would be when the Queen was married and had children." On these promises the Court and Government of England had fully relied. Yet within a few months Guizot wrote instructions to Bresson in Madrid which showed that he either had or pretended to have suspicions of the honesty of England. He directed him, should the Bourbon marriages be imperilled, at once to act directly and with vigour. The excuse for this conduct is found in the probability which at that time existed of a change of Ministry in England, and the substitution of Palmerston for Aberdeen at the Foreign Office. The change did not take place; nevertheless the transmission of the instructions to Bresson was shortly followed, February 1846, by a memorandum read by the French ambassador in London to Lord Aberdeen, which offensively suggested the dishonesty of England, asserting that France would hold herself absolved from all her engagements if a marriage with any one not descended from Philip V. became probable and imminent. The instructions and the despatch taken together amounted to this, that under certain circumstances of which France was the sole judge, all previous engagements were cancelled, and that the ambassador should if possible discover the existence of those circumstances. Conscious of his own rectitude, and relying upon the King's promise, Aberdeen disregarded the memorandum, no copy of it was given him, nor on his accession to office was Lord Palmerston informed of it.

Meanwhile in Spain, though Narvaez had been driven from office, his partisans, the Moderados, under the premiership of Isturitz, still retained power. Yet even they began to find their dependence upon France irksome, and awoke to the glaring iniquity of forcing upon the young Queen a husband whom she detested. They began to turn towards the English, and to revert to an old project which had already been once set aside, of marrying Isabella to Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. The ambition of Christina led her to support this match, which indeed offered many advantages. Personally well fitted to please the Queen, Leopold was connected with both the French and English courts, and his selection might be held to imply the desire of Spain,

Change of
government
and feeling in
Spain.

Proposal for
Coburg's
marriage with
Isabella.

while retaining her independence, to keep up friendly relations with both the rival nations. On the other hand, Louis Philippe had always felt the extremest repugnance to the idea. The brother of Leopold of Saxe-Coburg was already upon the throne of Portugal, and it appeared to him that the Peninsula would thus become wholly dependent upon England, if another cousin of Prince Albert's was placed upon the Spanish throne. Sir Henry Bulwer was informed of Christina's design. He was even asked to forward the proposition to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, who was at that time visiting Lisbon. Uncertain as to the reception of the plan by England, but feeling strong sympathy with the Spaniards and their Queen, he thought it safe to adopt the declared position of England, and while not in any way pressing the claims of the German prince, to give what assistance lay in his power to the free choice of the Spanish Court. In so doing he was undoubtedly acting against the wish of Aberdeen, whose main object was the maintenance of close friendship with France. When he told him what he had done he therefore met with a severe reprimand, and found his information at once communicated to the French Court. The extreme frankness of Aberdeen certainly proved that England was acting honestly, and had no special candidate in the field; but Bresson at once took advantage of the incident, and while the English were still quietly relying upon the promises of France, succeeded so completely as to be able to announce to Guizot in July 1846 that he had arranged for the simultaneous marriage of the Queen and the Infanta with the Dukes of Cadiz and Montpensier.

The French
arrange the
simultaneous
marriage of the
Queen and
Infanta.

Of this step Guizot approved, but some remnants of honesty prevented Louis Philippe from at once acceding to the plan. The friendship of England had been his chief support in the face of Europe, he could not but feel that the breach of his personal promise must forfeit that friendship. Guizot was still at work removing his lingering scruples, when the fall of the Conservative Ministry brought Lord Palmerston again into office. More than once, when in Opposition, Palmerston had charged the Ministry with truckling to France; his mistrust of the ambition of that country was well known, and his constant desire to maintain the prestige of England. There was good reason to think that he would seize the present opportunity, and press for the Coburg marriage. Had he done so Bulwer was convinced, although probably his opinion was erroneous, that the Court, Ministry, and nation of Spain would all alike have thrown them-

Effect of
Palmerston's
return to office.

selves into the arms of England. But though inclined to push matters very far, Palmerston was always desirous to avoid war; nor could he willingly desert that alliance with France on which his hope of maintaining the principle of constitutional government in Europe chiefly depended. He was besides a man of strong prejudices and predilections. He thoroughly mistrusted Queen Christina, who had suggested the Coburg alliance; he did not altogether understand the change which had taken place in Spanish feeling; he was surrounded by his old friends of the Progressista Party, now in exile; he could not bring himself to believe that any plan of Christina and the Moderados could deserve his support. He therefore frankly accepted the neutral policy of the outgoing Government with the intention of supporting, as far as his avowed neutrality would allow, the claims of Don Enrique, Duke of Seville, Paulo's younger son, who was now accepted as the leader of the Progressistas. In accordance with these views he wrote a despatch to Bulwer, and communicated it to the French Government. It stated in plain words the indifference of England as to the Queen's choice, so long as the balance of power was untouched. A marriage with neither of the three suitors—Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the Duke of Cadiz, or the Duke of Seville—appeared to him to infringe this principle. But he then launched out into a violent attack upon the government of the Moderado Party. It was an unfortunate exhibition of spleen. Louis Philippe, on the look-out for an excuse to break his word, found it in the fact that Coburg's name had appeared first in the list of suitors, though the whole tendency of the despatch was entirely neutral; and saw in the assault upon the Moderados, which he immediately communicated to the Spanish Ministry, a means of annihilating their incipient inclination to seek English assistance. Quite unaware of the effect of the despatch, the English Ministry continued to believe that the French were acting loyally. Even as late as the 27th of August, Guizot promised our ambassador in Paris that he would immediately write to Madrid and state that a marriage with the Duke of Seville would not be objectionable to France. At that moment he was well aware that the question was already settled, and only two days later it was publicly declared in Madrid that the Queen would marry the Duke of Cadiz and the Infanta the Duke of Montpensier at once and simultaneously.

Marriage of
Isabella and
the Infanta.
Oct. 10, 1846.

So scandalous a breach of morality has seldom been perpetrated, even in the notoriously immoral sphere of diplomacy. To gratify dynastic, or perhaps merely paternal ambition, the King's plighted

word had been broken, and a young princess doomed to the certainty of a hateful and unfruitful marriage. It is possible to question the bad faith shown by Louis Philippe in this transaction, and to argue that he really believed that Palmerston was setting on foot a new policy in spite of the declaration contained in his despatch. It is impossible to question his want of wisdom. The cordial alliance of England had been the chief support of the Orleans dynasty, and it was only by the combined action of the two nations that they were enabled to exert influence upon the politics of Europe. The despotic Powers at once regained their pre-eminence, and in the coming crisis, in which all the monarchies of Europe were involved, the French King found himself without a friend at the time of his sorest need. A breach between the Courts of France and England became inevitable, the *entente cordiale*, of which so much had been said, disappeared for ever. It seemed not unlikely that war might ensue. Palmerston turned at once to the Eastern Powers, and clamoured loudly that the Treaty of Utrecht had been broken. An appeal to so time-honoured a document was ridiculous enough. It was more to the point that the dissolution of the Western Alliance at once allowed the destruction of the much more recent Treaty of Vienna. Freed from all fear of interference, the despotic Powers in the East of Europe declared in so many words that that Treaty was abrogated, and destroyed the little remnant of the Polish State.

Folly of this
French
dishonesty.

France left
without allies.

Final
destruction of
Poland.

CHAPTER III.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S MINISTRY, July 1846.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord John Russell.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Cottenham.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Lansdowne.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Minto.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Charles Wood.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir George Grey.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Grey.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Palmerston.
<i>Secretary at War,</i>	Mr. Fox Maule.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Lord Auckland.
<i>President of the Board of Control,</i>	Sir John Cam Hobhouse.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Lord Clarendon.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Lord Clanricarde.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Lord Campbell.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Bessborough.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Brady.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Mr. Henry Labouchere.

The following changes subsequently took place :—

<i>Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,</i>	Lord Clarendon.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Sir William Somerville.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Henry Labouchere.

[These were on the death of Lord Bessborough, May 16, 1847.]

<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Sir Francis Baring, Jan. 1849.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Lord Carlisle, March 1850.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Truro, July 1850.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Granville, Dec. 1851.

IT must have required some courage on the part of Lord John Russell to assume the reins of Government upon the fall of Peel's Ministry. In the House, though he might to some degree, especially in his financial policy, rely upon the supporters of the late Ministry, they were after all an Opposition; though the Protectionists had joined him in overthrowing Peel, they were opposed to him in the whole temper of their political views; while the Radicals, though gratified by his late adherence to

Difficult position of Lord John Russell. July 1846.

their free-trade doctrines, were far from feeling sympathy with the great bulk of the Whig views. Nor even, supposing that his position in the House had been strong, were the difficulties to be encountered slight. There was Ireland, with its increasing outrages, its increasing misery, its increasing famine. The famine had not spared Scotland; and the trade of England, which under the Peel administration had risen to great prosperity in 1845, was again falling into depression. There was disturbance on the Continent, and a threatened movement among the autocratic Governments of the east of Europe for the final destruction of the remnant of Poland, at which England could hardly look on unmoved.

Lord John Russell however had apparently no difficulty in finding men willing to undertake the arduous duties of the ^{The new} Ministry. The Duke of Wellington was persuaded to continue to hold the office of Commander-in-Chief, without a seat in the Cabinet, and Duncannon (now become Lord Bessborough) made for a short time an efficient and popular Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The difficulty which had thwarted the Whig party at the beginning of the year had been the refusal of Lord Grey to hold office if Lord Palmerston came in as Foreign Minister. He could not persuade himself that the friendship between France and England, which he not unreasonably regarded as of the last importance in the existing state of Europe, would be safe in his hands, for Palmerston was known to have a personal dislike to the Orleans House, and to be actuated by a keen spirit of opposition to the French. But though he had, when in Opposition, more than once expressed somewhat strongly his feeling that Lord Aberdeen had unduly subordinated English interests to the continuation of the Alliance, Palmerston seems to have felt the substantial necessity of avoiding anything like a rupture; and by adopting in the main the policy of his predecessor so far removed Lord Grey's objection that that nobleman accepted the Colonial Office.

The consequence of Lord Palmerston's appointment has already been mentioned. Bound by his engagements to continue Lord Aberdeen's policy, he rejected the opportunity of securing influence in Spain by upholding the Coburg marriage, but was unable to refrain from severe strictures upon the Spanish Government and its action under French influence. He thus roused into activity the suspicious fear of the French King and Minister, who, throwing to the winds their former pledges, secretly and hastily brought their selfish policy to a conclusion in the Spanish marriages.

Difficulties abroad.

Yet though the outcry raised by the English Ministry and their friends who had thus been outwitted was loud, the pacific declarations of Palmerston on accepting office, as well as his own part in the late transactions, precluded the possibility of any serious breach between the countries. At the same time the irritation against France, and the condition of England itself, rendered equally impossible any active intervention in favour of Cracow, the absorption of which into the Austrian empire completed the spoliation of Poland. Protests and loud expostulation were the only resources left; and the Ministry in its foreign policy, and therefore in a more especial degree Lord Palmerston, fell with some show of justice under the charge of using strong language but failing when the time for action came; and the impression—a very disastrous one—began to gain ground that under no circumstances would England have recourse to arms.

But the management of Ireland was the first and most prominent work to be undertaken, for the disaster which had fallen on that country had now become obvious in all its terrible completeness. It was no doubt the apparent approach of famine, the wholesale blight on the potato crop, which had formed the chief factor in the conversion of Peel to free-trade. He had taken several well-considered steps to alleviate the threatened dearth. He had watched it anxiously, and had employed scientific men to inquire into its cause and probable cure. He had attempted to obtain sound seed for the coming year. He had advanced £100,000 from the Treasury for the purpose of drainage and improvement, and had purchased secretly and at the Government risk £100,000 worth of Indian meal. He had trusted to such assistance, small though it was, coupled with the lowered price of grain which he expected from his measures with regard to the Corn Laws, and to the energy of the people themselves, who did not yet despair. Though full of miserable forebodings, the peasantry had exhibited an almost feverish eagerness in planting their potatoes for the coming year. But it was a late and bad season, and towards the end of July almost suddenly the terrible blight swept again over the country, and the air was loaded with the unwholesome smell of the decaying potato-fields. "On the 27th of July," writes Father Matthew, "I passed from Cork to Dublin, and this doomed plant bloomed in all the luxuriance of an abundant harvest. Returning on the 3d of August, I beheld with sorrow one wild waste of putrifying vegetation. Stupor and despair fell upon the people. In many places the

Ireland, the chief difficulty.
Renewal of the potato blight. Aug. 1846.

wretched men were seated on the fences of their decaying gardens, wringing their hands, and wailing bitterly the destruction which had left them foodless." The stories of the miseries undergone are heartrending. The most foul and least nutritious food was sought and devoured. Horses and dogs, seaweed, and even grass, were used to allay the pangs of hunger. By the existing Poor Law outdoor relief did not exist in Ireland, and the lately erected workhouses were objects of universal detestation. They were now besieged by clamorous thousands who lay by the roadside and died waiting for their turn of admission.

It was a crisis which moved all parties alike in England; and the English people, who have never been wanting in charity, were eager in their desire to mitigate the terrible scourge. But the management of necessity fell first at least into the hands of Government. It has been the constant error of England to treat the Irish as though they were children, and by undertaking their work for them, by listening to their demands, and giving them concessions, to lead them to trust rather to the Government than to themselves. No doubt such treatment suited well the momentary wish of the Irish. But it fed the weakest part of their character, and fostered that deficiency of self-reliance which it should have been the first object of Government to remove. It was in accordance with precedent that Government, instead of applying a stimulus to independent action in all directions, now itself undertook to encounter the almost incurable evil which had fallen on the country. But at the same time, being under the influence of the strictest sect of political economists, it made a great parade of its non-interference with the ordinary courses of trade. The measure in which the policy of the Government was incorporated is known as the Labour Rate Act. In introducing it, Lord John Russell declared that he would not interfere with the regular mode by which Indian corn and other kinds of grain were brought into Ireland, or with the retail trade. The Bill established relief works. This Sir Robert Peel's Ministry had already done; but those works had been stopped, and nearly 100,000 men who had been at work on them thus added to the number of the unemployed. The present relief works were to be set on foot by the Board of Works at the recommendation of the Grand Juries; and to carry them on, Government agreed to advance money at 3½ per cent., to be repaid in ten years. To certain poorer districts £60,000 was to be granted. Thus the Government undertook to employ the people and to pay them, but to leave the supply

Mismanagement of the first efforts to relieve the famine. 1846.

of food entirely in private hands. The establishment of relief works upon sound economical principles must always present grave difficulties. To all appearance on the present occasion the well-meant efforts of Government did more harm than good. To fulfil the condition of non-interference with private interests, it was held that the works ought to be useless; road-making was one of the favourite forms of labour, and the roads seldom led anywhere. To organise the relief a very numerous staff of officials was necessary; it was found impossible to avoid gross jobbery in the appointments, or to secure efficiency in the 11,000 men who were employed. Useless and extravagant, the works brought with them even more disastrous results than a highly-paid waste of labour. It was found impossible to enforce good work; the lightness of the labour and the certainty of the wages attracted men from their own necessary work, and the neglect of the tillage of the fields which resulted threatened to render the famine perennial. The ill-considered adherence to the principle of non-interference with the retail trade was equally disastrous. The food of the people having been almost exclusively the potato, grown on their own plot of land, a retail trade scarcely existed; the weary labourer was compelled to walk many miles to procure his food, and as Government had declared in favour of open competition, that food was purchasable only at famine prices. Speculation ran riot, immense fortunes were made, and corn is said to have been shipped and re-shipped as many as four times on speculative voyages before it was finally parted with. It is true that certain Government depots of food were established. But again the system of non-interference rendered them of little avail; competition with the retail trader was forbidden, and the food might be sold only at the highest rate. The number of men employed upon the relief works was more than half a million, and the cost to England was about £1,000,000 a month. Meanwhile the curse of famine was bringing with it the still worse curse of disease. A terrible plague, known commonly as the road fever, attacked the people. It found an easy prey in the miserably weakened people worn out by famine, and gave rise to sickening scenes in the overcrowded workhouses and fever hospitals and their immediate neighbourhood. And all this time the land lay uncultivated, and the repetition in the ensuing year of similar scenes of disaster seemed only too certain. The unquestionably good intentions of the Government had resulted in a serious aggravation of the evil.

It was in the midst of the excitement which these terrible events

had roused in the people of England that the Parliament met for its last session on January 19, 1847. As a matter of course the main topic of the Queen's Speech—the main topic of thought in all men's minds—was Ireland. And no sooner were the necessary preliminaries got through than, on the 25th of January, the Prime Minister introduced the subject in the Lower House. After a description of the miserable condition of the country and of the efforts already made for its alleviation, he stated his intention of producing certain measures, some of a temporary character to meet the immediate evil, others, as he hoped, of a more permanent character, to prevent its recurrence. He used language—and he was not alone in using it—which seemed to imply that he regarded the time to have arrived for a reconstitution of Irish society. A crisis had indeed arrived, and a state of things existed which, however it had arisen, was an indelible disgrace to the English Government. It is strange, after the speeches of Lord John Russell and Lord Grey in the summer of 1846, in which they clearly pointed out that the inherent evil in Ireland was the existing land system—the competition for land, the tenure at will, and the frequency of arbitrary evictions—that they should not have made use of the present opportunity for at least attempting to touch this part of the national disease. Probably the immediate horrors of the famine made them for the moment forget what had given the famine its peculiar virulence, and induced them, like unskilful surgeons, to treat the symptoms instead of the cause of the illness. All the measures which they intended to be of permanent utility were directed to a greater production of food and a greater employment of labour. The state of society was left entirely untouched; the relations between landlord and tenant remained in the same unsatisfactory condition; and the reconstitution of Ireland—which should have been the work of the Government after the most careful and long-sighted deliberation—was left to the landlords, who, taking advantage of the unutterable misery of the people, carried it out to suit their own interests, with a haste which was little short of barbarous. For their immediate purpose the propositions of the Government were not ill considered. The Labour Rate Act had proved a distinct failure. It was proposed now, setting aside the rules of political economy, to proceed in the way of direct charity. Relief committees were to be formed to receive subscriptions and donations from Government, and to levy rates. With the money thus obtained soup-kitchens were to be established, and food given to the famishing

Measures of relief proposed in Parliament. Jan. 1847.

Soup-kitchens.

inhabitants either freely or for some small payment. The donations from the Government were to be advanced by way of loan, but although the form of a loan was preserved, the repayment was to be largely remitted. It was also proposed to advance £50,000 to the proprietors of Ireland to purchase seed. In fact the Government proposed that England should, in the midst of a calamity so extensive, support the famine-stricken Irish. These propositions of the Prime Minister were accepted and acted upon with the best results. There was still some mismanagement, for the discontinuance of the relief works, which was to have gone hand in hand with the new system of relief, was carried out so suddenly that when on the 1st of May the works altogether ceased very few of the soup-kitchens were in working order. But as soon as the relief committees were thoroughly organised actual death from starvation seems to have ceased.

The more permanent measures suggested were greater facilities in the advance of money from the Treasury for drainage and improvement of estates; the application of £1,000,000 to the reclamation of waste lands, to be divided into twenty-five acre lots to be ultimately sold to the tenants; the modification of the Poor Law, so as to allow of outdoor relief; encouragement afforded to the fisheries and to emigration; and finally, a Bill for facilitating the sale of encumbered estates. Of these Bills, the temporary measures, which assumed the form of a Bill for indemnifying Government for its past proceedings in Ireland and a Bill under the title of "The Destitute Persons (Ireland) Bill," were after some discussion carried. It was naturally objected that the Government was in fact charging England with the support of Ireland and pauperising the country; while by more than one speaker in the House the feeling that the landlords of Ireland were not doing their duty was very strongly expressed. But it was probably a fair answer to these objections that the crisis was one of a wholly exceptional character, and that there was no possibility of allowing the slowly working principles of political economy to come into play; the necessity was immediate, and the remedy must be applied at once. On these grounds the House allowed the Chancellor of the Exchequer to raise a loan of £8,000,000, which, with the £2,000,000 already advanced, would be required to meet the necessities of the case. As a reasonable and almost necessary consequence of the evident necessity of increasing the supply of food in Ireland, and of the determination of Government to allow the supply to be introduced by private enterprise, it

Permanent
measures
proposed.

The temporary
measures
carried.

was proposed to suspend for the time (whatever might be the subsequent course adopted) all restrictions hampering the import of corn; and the duties which by Sir Robert Peel's legislation were to have been continued till 1849, and even the shilling tax for the purpose of registration, were therefore suspended. But even when all duties were removed there remained a further restriction. The trade, by the Navigation Act, was confined to English shipping. It was of great importance to allow of immediate import from foreign countries, especially as the want of food was not confined to Great Britain, and any obstacle in the way of free importation might easily have diverted to foreign markets the supplies otherwise available. Upon these grounds, though not without considerable opposition on the part of English shipowners, the Navigation Act was suspended.

In the course of the discussions upon these temporary means of alleviating Irish misfortune, Lord John Russell had expressed his willingness to listen to any plans, other than those of Government, which might be suggested, and Lord George Bentinck had early given notice that he had in contemplation a wide alternative scheme. In accordance with his promise the Premier gave Bentinck an opportunity early in February of explaining his plan. It was based upon the idea that what Ireland wanted was an influx of capital. For the purpose of introducing it and applying it in a useful manner, he recommended the advance by Government of £16,000,000 to the Irish railway companies. Acts had already passed Parliament for the construction of 1500 miles of railway in Ireland, but only 123 miles had as yet been made. He could not explain, he said, how it was, if population, as asserted by the chief railway authorities, was the first element of success, private speculators had not come forward to invest their capital. But the fact being so, he recommended that for every £100 spent by the companies £200 should be lent at the rate at which England could borrow it (presumably four per cent. or less) in aid of their work. The advantage he considered would be the almost immediate employment of 110,000 men, representing (including the families) 550,000 persons. He urged that the security would be ample, for that the railways would pay; that this number of labourers would therefore practically be supported on nothing, the many thousands (which he calculated at £200,000 a year) which their maintenance on the present system would cost the country would be saved, and the value of Irish land permanently increased by £23,000,000. Like all Lord

Corn and
Navigation
Laws
suspended.
Jan. 27, 1847.

Bentinck's
railway scheme
refused.
Feb. 1847.

George Bentinck's speeches, the address in which he recommended his plan showed great dexterity in the manipulation of figures, and completeness in the working out of detail; but it was not a scheme which could possibly find favour in Parliament. It was in the first place entirely speculative. There was no proof, nor could there be

Objections to it. in the minds of most men under the existing circumstances much belief in the probability of the financial success of the railways themselves. It seemed a manifest injustice on the part of the Imperial Government to support so largely the interests of a certain number of speculative companies. The advantages to be derived from the plan, although indirectly the Irish people were to be benefited, came first into the hands of the railway companies and then to the Irish landlords. Even the labourers on the railroads might very probably not have been Irish, as the contractors would in their own interest have employed the best labourers they could get, probably men already practised in railway-making in England and elsewhere. The scheme attacked one of the first principles of the economists, that the employment of private capital should be left under the guidance of private interests. And indeed the remarks of Sir Robert Peel upon the plan seemed at once to show its futility. If an addition of £23,000,000 to the value of Irish land was to be the result, what could possibly be preventing the Irish landlords from themselves carrying it out? On financial grounds, too, the Government refused to have anything to do with it; already contemplating for immediate necessities, a loan of £8,000,000, they could not believe that their application for a second loan of twice the amount could be made without seriously disarranging the money market and hampering their arrangements. As a matter of course the plan was rejected by a large majority. Yet though financially and according to economic rules it was obviously absurd, it does not seem so certain, in view of what has been done in India under circumstances of a somewhat similar character, that a Government guarantee for a certain percentage of returns might not have been desirable as a means of attracting private enterprise. The state of Ireland was so bad, and as it has proved so permanent, that a considerable loss of money to England might have been well encountered for the sake of changing it. And in fact the Government seems to have been so far influenced by the belief that increased means of locomotion were of vast importance, that within a few weeks they themselves produced and carried a Bill, conceived in the same spirit, though of infinitely smaller dimensions, for advancing £620,000 to the Irish railways. The Encumbered Estates

Act, a proposal which had somewhat the same object in view, and aimed at introducing a more solvent class of landlords, was postponed for a future year, and when carried was not wholly successful in its results, since it placed the land of Ireland more entirely in the hands of those who were determined to work it for a profit, and rendered probably still more glaring the defects of the English system of landlord and tenant as applied in Ireland.

Encumbered
Estates Act
postponed.

In the same way the measure for the improvement of waste lands was allowed to fall through, and the only permanent measure which was actually completed was the alteration of the Irish Poor Law. Up to the passing of the Poor Law Act, introduced by Lord John Russell in 1838, no burden had been imposed on either the resident or absentee landlord. Subsequently landlord and tenant were equally charged with the support of the poor in the workhouses; but outside those buildings the destitute were supported by the voluntary charity, not of the landlord, but of the middle and lower classes. Henceforward, when the workhouses were full, the support of the destitute under proper restrictions was to be met as in England by a rate levied upon landlord and tenant alike. The Irish landlords made a powerful opposition to this Bill, urging that the land in Ireland was unable to support the poor, and that the whole rental would be thus consumed. It encountered a still stronger opposition in the House of Lords, where Lord Stanley failed to carry an amendment rendering it unlawful for a tenant-at-will to deduct any part of the rates from his rent, but proved unfortunately strong enough to secure the rejection of a clause by which when the rates exceeded 2s. 6d. in any district, the excess was chargeable on the whole union. That clause being removed, and the burden of the rates thrown upon the smaller area, it became the interest of the few landlords holding land in the district to get rid of the poor from their properties; and this undoubtedly had its effect upon the subsequent tendency to wholesale eviction. With this important omission, which the Government thought it necessary to accept, the Bill was passed.

It was not only the Irish famine and the fever which accompanied it which had driven for the time both the political and social condition of that country out of sight. O'Connell, the great Liberator, made his last speech in February of this year, and died abroad on the 15th of May. In spite of the exaggeration and recklessness of his assertions, and of the personal

Death of
O'Connell,
May 15, 1847.

hatred and mistrust engendered by them in the minds of many Englishmen, he had even in his most turbulent times confined himself as he believed to constitutional action. He had been a great figure, not only at monster meetings in Ireland, but in the House of Commons. He had there been in close connection with the Liberal party. He was a man whom it was possible for a Government to take into account, and to treat as a recognised force in Parliament. He had moreover obtained, as no other man ever did, the love and command of the Irish people. His influence was supreme; and even while pushing matters to such extremes that he brought himself within the reach of the law, he consistently upheld the necessity of peaceable agitation only. But of late there had arisen a covert opposition to him, centred in the writers of the *Nation* newspaper, and known as "Young Ireland," who believed that constitutional means had been exhausted and that more decided action would be necessary to gain their ends. The Parliamentary spokesman of this party was Smith O'Brien, its chief members, Mitchell, Gavan Duffy, and Meagher. The removal of O'Connell and the attempted substitution of his very inferior son John as the leader of the Repeal movement produced a complete split in the party; and although Smith O'Brien was a man to respect and urged his cause with much ability, the English Government, freed from the commanding presence of O'Connell and aware of the divided state of Irish feeling, felt itself no longer obliged to adopt the same caution as before. Thus the claims of Ireland, and its wishes for a change in its social system, being no longer powerfully supported, sunk out of sight, and England was contented to act with generous charity indeed, but without intelligent sympathy for Irish needs.

The measures adopted by Parliament relieved the immediate effects of famine; but they came too late to stop the famine itself or to alleviate the terrible scourge of pestilence which followed on it. The deaths from fever in the year 1846 were 17,145, in the following year 57,000, to which 27,000 by dysentery must be added. And though probably actual deaths from want of food ceased with the establishment of soup-kitchens, the loss before they were established, and the deaths resulting indirectly from insufficient food, and therefore classed as deaths by starvation, were not less than 6000 in this year. The details of the misery are beyond expression horrible. In one hospital in Dublin 12,000 cases applied in ten months. At Cork there were 147 deaths in one week; and on one day there were 44 corpses in the workhouse. It was

Deaths from
famine and
fever.

impossible that such misery should pass by without demoralising the people. Robberies and violence increased; men sought admission into the jails by means of some misdemeanour. On the west coast the starving islanders turned pirates, and robbed ships in hopes of finding food in them. The hearts even of the charitable Irish peasantry seemed to grow hard under their misery, and often no pity and no refuge was offered to their starving and fever-stricken neighbours. Murders increased in number, and although in some cases the victims were small farmers, and the object robbery, the assassinations were more generally acts of vengeance upon landlord's agents and process-servers. To such an extent indeed had crimes of this description increased, especially in the counties of Clare, Limerick, and Tipperary, that almost immediately after the assembling of the new Parliament which met in November, Sir George Grey, the Home Secretary, brought in a bill of a coercive character, very similar to that on which Sir Robert Peel's Ministry had been defeated. It allowed the Lord Lieutenant to proclaim disturbed districts, in which the possession of firearms then became illegal, and to which he might send at the cost of the district an increased force of constabulary. The obnoxious Curfew clause was not however repeated, and an effort was made to counteract the open sympathy displayed by the people with the assassins by giving the police the right to call upon all men above 16 years of age to assist them in the pursuit of murderers. The Liberals had thus again when in office followed the line of policy which they had denounced when in opposition. Nor did they couple it with any remedial measure beyond those included in the temporary expedients of the former session. It was in vain that voices were lifted up in favour of some change in the land system, such for instance as the establishment of the Ulster custom, which implied fixity of tenure. Yet now if ever was the time when a great change of this description might have been carried through without difficulty. For not only had the late years of misery deeply moved the English nation, but the action of the landlords, left free to work their system to its extreme, had begun to excite the disgust of many Englishmen. It was not without provocation that the Irish people were apparently sinking into a race of lawless savages, or the younger more eager patriots dreaming of an appeal to arms. For many years the evil effects of what were spoken of as *Clearances* had excited attention. Lord Devon's Commission had mentioned them. Lord Grey had spoken of them with abhorrence. But it was to them that the

Increase of
crime.

Coercion Bill.
Dec. 1847.

The Clearances.

Irish landlords were now proceeding to have recourse. Deprived of their rent of necessity during the height of the famine, and saddled by the new Poor Law with the maintenance of the poor, they were determined as far as in them lay to restore their land to the condition of profitable property. It can scarcely be said with certainty whether Ireland was over-populated or not; that is to say, whether the employment of the existing labour in wise directions would or would not have produced a sufficiency of food to meet the requirements of the people. But at first sight it no doubt appeared evident that the land was settled with a vast mass of pauperism, engendered by the fatal habit of subletting, and by the establishment of cottier tenancies, and that the only hope of restoring it to a remunerative condition lay in the large diminution of its population. The opposite view was somewhat speculative, and required a large and enlightened self-

Unutterable
misery of the
evicted.

denial leading to a complete change in social organisation; the policy of clearance was simple and immediate. It is difficult to say that the proprietors had not a right to clear their lands, or that they were not even justified in trying to do so. But the manner in which they carried out their intentions and its fearful consequences form one of the blackest chapters in Irish history. The process of clearance continued during 1848 and 1849. In these years there was never a cessation of famine and of fever; the earlier part of 1849 was, in fact, as terrible as that of 1847 in many parts of the island, especially in the west and south-west. Throughout the whole of these two years the people were in a truly fearful condition, and are described as "half-starved creatures everywhere in the fields, picking weeds or herbs to eat." The number of deaths from fever and its kindred diseases was indeed higher in 1849 than in the previous years, reaching a total of 123,386. It was upon people in this unutterable misery that the landlords had to act in carrying out their plan of clearing the land. Two or three reports from Captain Kennedy, an official of the Poor Law in the Kilrush Union, describe in a few words what was done. "In November 1847," he writes, "an immense number of small landholders are under ejectment or notice to quit, even where the rents have been paid up." Four months later we are told that some of those admitted to the Kilrush workhouse "were the most appalling cases of destitution and suffering" it had ever been the writer's lot to witness. "The state of most of these wretched creatures is traceable to the numerous evictions which have lately taken place." A fortnight later he states his conviction that "1000 cabins have been levelled in this union within a

very few months." The numbers rapidly increased. A month later he calculated that 6000 houses had been levelled since November. "The wretchedness, ignorance, and helplessness of the poor on the western coast of this union prevent them seeking a shelter elsewhere; they linger about the localities for weeks or months, burrowing behind the ditches under a few broken rafters of their former dwelling, refusing to enter the workhouse till the parents are broken down and their wretched offspring beyond recovery. The misery attendant upon these wholesale evictions is frequently aggravated by hunting these ignorant helpless creatures off the property from which they perhaps have never before wandered five miles. It is not an unusual occurrence to see 40 or 50 houses levelled in one day, and orders given that no remaining tenant or occupier should give even a night's shelter. I have known some ruthless acts committed by drivers and sub-agents, but, no doubt, according to law, however repulsive to humanity; wretched hovels pulled down where the inmates were in a helpless state of fever and nakedness, and left by the roadside for days. As many as 300 of the most helpless class have been left houseless in one day." In April 1849 the same writer reported that on one farm alone where there had been 73 houses there were now but 13. And in May, "notwithstanding that fearful numbers have been unhoused in this union within the year (probably 15,000), it seems hardly credible that 1200 more have had their dwellings levelled within this fortnight." The whole report was so terrible that it moved Sir Robert Peel to say that he did "not think the records of any country, civil or barbarous, presented materials for such a picture as was set forth in the statement of Captain Kennedy."

But whatever horror may have been excited by the inhumanity of the proceeding no attempt was made to stop it. The English Parliament was unable to conceive the legitimacy of interfering with the rights of property under any circumstances. The evil was traced not to the system which gave one man as complete command over the life of another as if he had been his slave, but to the bankrupt condition of the Irish landlords. No doubt it was impossible to expect from the bankrupt proprietors, whose lands were frequently in the hands of mortgagees, that sort of care for their tenants which a prosperous English landlord almost invariably shows. The necessity of paying the charges on the estate and living out of it drove such poverty-oppressed owners to a rigorous exaction of rent, and to attempts to make their property more

Encumbered
Estates Act.
1849.

Kennedy's
report.

lucrative. Thus the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849 was in principle a wise measure. It did not however produce such good results as were anticipated. The land, sold forcibly at a time of depression, fetched but small prices for the advantage of the original owners, and fell largely into the hands of mercantile men, often of the very class which had hitherto furnished the money-lenders and mortgagees, from whom it was intended the land should be rescued. It created also an indefeasible Parliamentary title which could not be disregarded, and strengthened the position of the landed proprietor against any future attempt to change for the advantage of the people the absolute character of his tenure. But this well-intentioned measure, from which great results were anticipated, had not been introduced till the critical state of Ireland had rendered repression a matter of absolute necessity, and an act of open rebellion had placed the leaders of the Young Ireland party at the mercy of the English Government.

The Young Ireland party had entirely broken with the pacific policy of O'Connell, and in the spring of the year 1848 had used and printed language of a character in the last degree inflammatory. Rebellion was openly preached, advice as to the best means of destroying the troops given in detail, and all efforts at a peaceful solution of the difficulty treated with the profoundest contempt. The hopes of the party of rebellion had been raised by events in France. Smith O'Brien had gone to Paris for the purpose of obtaining assistance from the Provisional Government which had lately been established there. Lamartine, the President, had indeed declined to pay attention to his request, wisely pointing out the continued desire of France, even though it had become a Republic, to cultivate the friendship not of one part of Great Britain but of the whole country. None the less the Irish leaders were still boasting that 50,000 Frenchmen were ready to assist them in subverting the Monarchy. The Government thought it necessary to bring such violent and seditious writing within the compass of a more stringent regulation. A Bill was therefore brought in for altering the Act of 1795 with regard to high treason. By that Act compassing the deposition of the Sovereign, intending or compassing to levy war against the Sovereign, and seeking to bring a foreign foe into the country, were offences liable to the penalties of high treason. It was now proposed to declare them felony, and that persons guilty of them should be liable to transportation. The word "compassing" was to include the publishing or printing of any writing, or open and avowed speaking.

Outbreak of
the 1848
rebellion.

Government
Security Bill
passed.
April 22.

The Act thus changed was to be extended to Ireland, where it had not hitherto been applicable. Smith O'Brien made his last appearance in Parliament to oppose this measure. Within a few weeks, in company with Meagher, and Mitchell, the editor of *United Ireland*, the most outspoken of the Young Ireland party, O'Brien was brought to trial under its provisions. Mitchell was found guilty and sentenced to fourteen years' transportation, O'Brien and Meagher were acquitted, and able for some weeks longer to continue their treasonable course. The conviction of Mitchell and the arrest of Duffy under the late Act seemed to have driven the leaders to immediate action, and to have produced an abortive insurrection which for a while ruined their cause. The Confederation, as the Association of Young Irelanders was called, made preparations for a general rising in August, for the purpose of rescuing Mitchell and anticipating the trial of Gavan Duffy. Information of what was going on, and the strong representations of Lord Clarendon, the Lord Lieutenant, that extraordinary measures were absolutely necessary, induced the Government on the 22d of July to introduce a Bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. So urgent was the need considered that the Bill was hurried through all its stages on the Saturday, agreed to by the House of Lords on Monday, and received the royal assent on the Tuesday. On the arrival at Dublin of information that the Bill would be passed, Meagher and Dillon at once proceeded to join O'Brien in Tipperary. For several days the three leaders passed through the country making speeches, drilling and collecting armed parties. On Saturday July 29 a body of police some forty or fifty strong marched to disperse the rebels. They found themselves almost surrounded by some thousands of insurgents, and went for shelter to a neighbouring house. An attack of no very serious nature was made upon this post, and the fire returned by the police. On the arrival of a larger party of police, O'Brien, finding resistance useless, and losing all hope of persuading the constabulary to join in the movement, withdrew from his followers, and was shortly after arrested. A Commission was issued, before which O'Brien, Meagher, M'Manus, and several others were tried for high treason and condemned to death, a sentence subsequently commuted to transportation for life. With almost ludicrous perverseness the prisoners whose lives had thus been spared refused the commutation of their sentence, declaring that their own assent was requisite; the Queen could pardon, but the pardon must be absolute.

Habeas Corpus
Act suspended.
July 22.

Suppression of
the rebellion.
July 29.

Sentence of
the leaders.
October 23.

The law officers of the Crown, although they entirely denied the grounds of the objection, caused a Bill to be introduced into Parliament to put the Queen's power of pardon in cases of high treason beyond further controversy. The prisoners were all deported as quickly as possible to various colonies, and all with the exception of O'Brien thankfully accepted the advantages of tickets-of-leave which Government at once offered them. The absurd inefficiency of the attempt at an insurrection, of which so much had been threatened, threw an air of ridicule over the whole proceedings of the Irish agitators. The capture and punishment or flight of so many of the ringleaders deprived the movement of all guidance, and for a time Ireland ceased to be a subject of dread, although the means of curing its disaffection and of healing the deep-seated social sores with which it was afflicted remained as a chief difficulty in the way of every English Government.

The misery of Ireland, and the measures of relief which it had necessitated, raised far-reaching questions as to the soundness of the general principles on which our commercial and social arrangements had hitherto rested. When it had been found necessary to suspend the Corn and Navigation Laws, it became a question whether they were under any circumstances desirable. When our financiers were driven to alter the sugar duties, the question of the protection of the Colonial industry was at once touched. The raising of the loan of £8,000,000 involved the whole principle of taxation; while the possibility of such a dissolution of society as was visible in Ireland under the influence of the misery, poverty, and ignorance of the labouring classes, might well direct attention to the condition of those classes in our own country.

In the early Session of 1847 but little of any sort was completed. The approaching dissolution, and the absorbing interest of Ireland, did not allow of much activity in other directions. But the feeling that it was necessary to ameliorate the lot of the workman was shown in the large majorities by which an Act introduced by Mr. Fielden for limiting the hours of labour of young persons between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, in certain factories, was carried. It was a revolt against the strict principles of political economy; and its success was secured by the general sentiment of Parliament in opposition to the arguments of its most respected leaders, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir James Graham, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Brougham, and Lord Clarendon, all

Effects of Irish
affairs on
England.

Mr. Fielden's
Factory Act.
May 1847.

of whom strongly condemned it. It was urged that it must inevitably produce a decrease of wages, which the high and rising price of provisions would render disastrous, for it could be hardly possible in most cases for the factory to continue at work after the dismissal of the young persons. It was asserted to be a restriction on free contract, a compulsory limitation upon the willing work of the industrious man. It was urged that the two hours it was proposed to withdraw from labour was exactly that time which returned his profit to the manufacturer; and that in the general competition, which the country was wilfully seeking by its newly introduced free trade, this Act would strike a deathblow at manufacturing interests. Even Sir Robert Peel, who foresaw the immense importance of the working classes, and was eager for their well-being, urged with all his authority that education and the larger command of the necessities of life were the true means of securing it, and that unless they had these preliminary requisites increased leisure would be useless to them. But sympathy with the dreary lot of unenlivened labour; the not wholly unfounded belief that the quality of shortened hours of work might make up for the loss of quantity; the principle which has guided much of the action of the Liberal party that the boon must be given before the recipient can be raised to the full power of enjoying it; and more than all the social conscience which had been aroused and was impatient for the immediate removal of evil, rendered Parliament deaf to such arguments, and the Bill was carried by large majorities in both Houses.

The question of national education, which appeared to some to be the only sure method of ameliorating the condition of the working classes, was also engaging the attention of Government. The establishment of a Committee of Privy Council by Lord John Russell in 1839, for the purposes of national education, had formed a starting-point. The grant for schools at that time was but £10,000. Efforts to extend the system upon wider lines had been made by Sir James Graham in 1842, but had failed. The grant however had been several times increased, and Lord John Russell now asked Parliament for £100,000. So small a sum could have excited no opposition from those who thought that the duty of educating the people lay upon Government. But there were many who denied this duty, and were jealous of the increasing outlay on education, and of the patronage which its distribution appeared to place in the hands of Government. There were others who looked upon the scheme as at present existing as unduly favourable to the

Russell's
education grant
carried.
May 1847.

interests of the English Church. It was the opposition of this class (which included both Roman Catholics and Dissenters) which had obliged Sir James Graham to withdraw his propositions. Lord John Russell was fully aware of the difficulties which beset any general plan, and was induced by the apparent impossibility of combining conflicting interests to confine his efforts to the improvement of the class of teachers. The grant he demanded was for the purpose of giving effect to a minute of the Educational Committee of Council issued the preceding year, and chiefly drawn up by Sir Kay Shuttleworth. The scheme itself might be carried out by the authority of the Crown without recourse to Parliament. All he required was the money. In making his demand he stated that the Roman Catholics would still be excluded from the advantages of the grant, but that this arose from no wish of his or of the Government. The obstacle in their way, which he did not as yet see the means of removing, was the necessity of the employment, in the religious teaching of the schools, of the authorised version of the Bible. The clear declaration of Government that they were ready at a future time to admit the Roman Catholics to its advantages removed one great objection to the grant, and it was ultimately allowed by a considerable majority. The scheme which was thus authorised formed in many respects the basis of the subsequent development of our national education. Masters were by it allowed to take pupil-teachers as apprentices, careful inspection under strict conditions was established, and pensions were granted to superannuated masters. It was hoped that those arrangements, although they fell far short of establishing any general system, would at least secure the efficiency of such schools as chose to seek Government assistance.

With the exception of a Bill for the establishment of a Bishop of Manchester, little else of importance was done during this Session. The opposition which stood in the way of so reasonable a Bill was grounded on the difficulty felt to any increase of the number of spiritual peers, and was overcome by an arrangement by which the number of bishops having seats in the House remained unchanged, the junior bishop being excluded unless he should happen to be the bishop of London, Winchester, or Durham. Several very important Bills were withdrawn, and the Parliament was prorogued preparatory to a dissolution in July. The election which followed was uneventful. It was carried out with less than the usual excitement, and produced no marked change in the balance of parties. It was thought necessary

Bishopric of
Manchester Bill.
July 1847.

New
Parliament.
Nov. 23, 1847.

to bring the new Parliament together in the middle of November. There were two causes which led to its being thus early summoned. The continued increase of outrage and social disorganisation in Ireland seemed to call for repressive measures, and the commerce of England was passing through a dangerous crisis. The measures taken with regard to Ireland have been already mentioned.

With regard to the commercial difficulty the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that a committee should be appointed to examine into the causes of distress and into the operation of the Bank Restriction Act of 1844. In introducing his motion he sketched the course of events which necessitated it. The failure of the harvest in 1846, and of the potato crop, had rendered necessary a large importation of corn, more than could be paid for in goods, and consequently money payments had been required. At the same time railway enterprise had demanded a great amount of capital. And both the corn trade and the making of railways had afforded a wide field for speculation. Such speculations may be carried on long upon credit, but money must be eventually obtained, and the expenses met by obtaining advances from banks and dealers in money, upon securities payable at some future date, and realised at once upon the payment of discount. The demand for such advances became so great that they could not be obtained even at a very high rate of discount. The pressure had begun in April, but had apparently passed away. It set in again with extreme severity in the autumn. Unable to obtain money either from their own resources or by means of advances, house after house, many of them of high standing, stopped payment. The Bank of England, which in some degree regulated the money market, continually raised its rate of discount to 6, 7, and 8 per cent., at the same time shortening the period for which it was willing to lend its money. A crisis seemed approaching. In spite of the high rate money was not forthcoming, the failures continued, the funds fell as low as 79, and so difficult was it to obtain money that the Bank of England was practically the only establishment from which advances could be got. The Bank Restriction Act of 1844 had set a limit to the amount of notes which the Bank could issue, and consequently limited its power of making advances. It appeared that that limit would soon be reached, that all the means of obtaining additional money would have been exhausted, and that universal bankruptcy would follow. The condition of the country was so serious that the Government thought it right to interfere, and wrote to the bank directors advising them to continue to

Commercial
crisis.
Sept.-Oct. 1847.

advance, even though in so doing they passed the legal limits. The ministers suggested, as a means of keeping the advances within reasonable bounds, the maintenance of a very high rate of discount, but promised that if it should be necessary to infringe the restrictions of

Credit
re-established
Dec. 1847.

1844 they would introduce into Parliament a Bill to indemnify the directors from this breach of the law. Upon this suggestion the bank acted. The knowledge that further accommodation was within reach checked the panic. The high rate of discount, and the great demand, had the natural effect of attracting money from abroad; and by degrees, without any infringement of the law, credit was re-established and the pressure lightened. But it remained evident that this had only been effected by an authoritative relaxation of the restriction of the Bank Act, and it became a very natural question whether a restriction which could not be enforced in time of difficulty was worth maintaining. It was consequently subjected to severe criticisms; but Sir Robert Peel vindicated the measure of which he had been the author, showed that the unexpected scarcity of food, the wild spirit of speculation, and the failure of the cotton crop were the chief causes of the present distress, and declared it to be his belief (a belief which was generally accepted as correct) that any tampering with the existing law would afford but temporary assistance with the risk of greater subsequent danger. He also pointed out that although many important failures had undoubtedly taken place, there had been as a fact no run on the bank for gold, and that the country had been consequently saved from the terrible disorders of 1838 and 1839.

Although the Government had been allowed to raise a loan of £8,000,000 to meet the requirements of the Irish famine, the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not desire to continue this very questionable method of supplying the revenue, and the financial difficulties to be overcome were by no means slight. The threatening aspect of political affairs on the Continent had raised into prominence the condition of the national defences, and the opinion that they were wholly inadequate had been strongly expressed. The receipts of the year had fallen below the estimate under nearly every head. The only important increase was that derived from the sugar duties since they had been lowered; and this was the only practical proof of the advantages of Free-trade. Various causes had kept up the price of food. The commercial theory of 1846 had therefore to be upheld against a Protectionist party not yet silenced by the overwhelming logic of facts; while the Radical

Financial em-
barrassments
of Government.

free-traders regarded with indignation all idea of increased armaments.

The question of the commercial policy to be pursued arose early in the Session, upon a motion of Lord George Bentinck for a Committee to consider the condition of the West India planters. Their depression could not be denied. However, although their claims were enforced not only by the usual arguments in favour of protection, but by others peculiar to their case—such as want of labour, the duty of supporting free labour in opposition to slavery, and the special responsibility England had incurred by the abolition of the slave-trade—Government succeeded in maintaining its free-trade attitude. The planters had to content themselves with a small loan for the purpose of encouraging immigration of free labour, and with a reduction of the duty paid by sugar from the colonies. But upon the production of the Budget the financial weakness of the Government became evident. Afraid, in the present disturbed state of Europe, to adopt the plan of the advanced free-traders and diminish the warlike expenditure of the country, and rightly disinclined to increase the national debt, additional taxation appeared the only means of encountering the formidable deficit. Lord John Russell therefore proposed to renew the income-tax at the increased rate of one shilling in the pound for five years. His proposition encountered the most vehement opposition. While one party cried out against the wicked expenditure on the army and navy, another revived all the arguments previously urged against direct taxation; a third, while accepting it in principle, pointed out the injustice of taxing realised property and professional incomes equally, and clamoured for an income-tax graduated in some way to meet this difficulty. The Government yielded to the storm. It allowed the army and navy estimates to be examined by a committee charged with the duty of reducing them if possible. It gave up the idea of increasing the income-tax, though maintaining it at its present rate, and in its present form. And at last, late in August, when, after all this patching and correction was over, the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his definite statement, he found himself obliged to demand a renewed loan of £2,000,000, which, not without considerable objection, was ultimately allowed.

Free-trade
maintained.
June 4, 1848.

The Budget
withdrawn.
August 1848.

Few things lower the credit of a Government more than a rejected budget, and a strong feeling began to gain ground of the inefficiency of the present Ministers to grapple with financial difficulty. Yet on

the whole Government had passed through a time of most unusual anxiety with very fair success. And it was not without truth that the Prime Minister urged, in reply to the sharp attack of Disraeli with which the session closed, that "that gentleman had remarked that there had been sedition in England, rebellion in Ireland, and revolution in Europe; but that when sedition had been checked in England, rebellion suppressed in Ireland, and foreign revolution prevented from shaking our institutions at home, the administration of the empire could scarcely have been very defective." The Prime Minister's boast was justified by the outbreaks of revolutionary energy which had shaken nearly every throne in Europe, while in England they had been easily suppressed by the mere exhibition of the power and determination of the orderly classes.

Continuation of
the Chartist
movement.

The suppression of the Chartist outbreaks in 1843 had by no means put an end to their agitation. But the unity of the party had been much disturbed. The more violent Chartists had broken from the Radical reformers, and had themselves divided into two sections; for their nominal leader, Feargus O'Connor, was at bitter enmity with more thoroughgoing and earnest leaders such as O'Brien and Cooper. O'Connor had not proved a very efficient guide. He had entered into a land scheme of a somewhat doubtful character, which consisted in purchasing an estate, raising money on it, with this money purchasing another, and so on, until eight estates had been purchased, upon each of which he proposed to put fifty shareholders, and hoped at the end of some years, through the improvements carried out, to produce a large balance for the advantage of the association. For a popular leader to engage in monetary speculation is always dangerous, and O'Connor suffered the usual fate in charges brought against him of dishonesty. He had also injudiciously taken up a position of active hostility to the free-traders, and while thus appearing as the champion of a falling cause had alienated many of his supporters. Yet the Parliament elected in 1846 contained several representatives of the Chartists' principles, and O'Connor himself had been returned for Nottingham by a large majority over Hobhouse, a member of the new Ministry. The revolution in France gave a sudden and enormous impulse to the agitation. The country was filled with meetings at which violent speeches were uttered and hints, not obscure, dropped of the forcible establishment of a republic in England. A new Convention was summoned for the 6th of April, a vast petition was prepared, and a meeting,

at which it was believed that half a million of people would have been present, was summoned to meet on Kennington Common on the 10th of April for the purpose of carrying the petition to the House in procession. The alarm felt in London was very great. It was thought necessary to swear in special constables, and the wealthier classes came forward in vast numbers to be enrolled. There are said to have been no less than 170,000 special constables. The military arrangements were intrusted to the Duke of Wellington; the public offices were guarded and fortified; public vehicles were forbidden to pass the streets lest they should be employed for barricades; and measures were taken to prevent the procession from crossing the bridges, if, in spite of its declared illegality, the Chartists should persist in their intention. Such a display of determination seemed almost ridiculous when compared with what actually occurred. But it was in fact the cause of the harmless nature of the meeting. Instead of half a million about 30,000 men assembled on Kennington Common. Feargus O'Connor was there; Mr. Maine, the Commissioner of Police, called him aside, told him he might hold his meeting, but that the procession would be stopped, and that he would be held personally responsible for any disorder that might occur. His heart had already begun to fail him, and he expressed his gratitude for the civility of the police, went back to his meeting, and used all his influence to put an end to the procession. His prudent advice was followed, and no disturbance of any importance took place.

The firm attitude taken up by the middle-classes and the Government, and its complete success, could not but be regarded, in the midst of revolutionary fury in Europe, as a remarkable proof of the stability of the English society and its institutions. The air of ridicule thrown over the Chartist movement by the abortive close of a demonstration which had been heralded with so much violent talk was increased by the disclosures attending the presentation of the petition. Upwards of 5,000,000 signatures were declared to be appended to the document; and its supporters doubtless hoped that it would make a great impression by its mere bulk. But Parliament referred it to the Committee on Petitions. A number of law stationers were employed to count and examine the signatures. The number proved to be less than 2,000,000, and of those very many were obviously false. Whole sheets were in one handwriting; eight per cent. were the signatures of women; and the Queen, Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister, and Punch made their

Preparations
for the 10th of
April 1848.

The Chartist
petition.
April 14.

vict.

M

appearance among the signatories. This failure proved a deathblow to Chartism. O'Connor had in fact lost his influence, and was already giving signs of a weakened mind. At the same time reviving prosperity, the action of the new Poor Law and of the Corn Law reforms, began to alleviate the physical want which had after all been the main supporter of the movement. The Charter as a whole ceased to

End of the
Chartist
movement.

be a standard round which revolutionary forces might gather, yet every point in it adopted by serious politicians and urged in a constitutional manner has played its part in subsequent political history. Of its five points, two have been accepted, two have been closely approached, while of the fifth, payment of members, the last has not yet been heard.

Though it is ridiculous to trace great movements affecting the social politics of nearly every State in Europe to the political action of governments or of kings, it is true that the conduct of rulers, by giving occasion for great forces to exhibit themselves, plays an important part in at all events regulating the time of such movements. The questionable policy of Louis Philippe with regard to the Spanish marriages no doubt accelerated the great movement of 1848. The friendship with England on which his position had chiefly rested was entirely destroyed. The position of France and England as the joint supporters of Liberal and Constitutional ideas on the Continent was no longer tenable, and while in the national movements which were going on in Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, and Italy, England, under the guidance of Lord Palmerston, pursued perhaps even with undue vigour a course implying sympathy with the Liberal party, France was driven more and more into Conservative lines. It would appear that Louis Philippe had drawn so close to the despotic Governments of Europe that he had actually entered into an arrangement for mutual support, from which England was excluded.

Reactionary
tendencies in
France.

In France itself the same Conservative tendencies on the part of the King were visible. A fierce opposition came into existence, clamouring for a reform and enlargement of the constituencies. The measures taken by the Government against this movement, and its final step in forbidding reform banquets in Paris, were the proximate cause of the outbreak of February 1848 and of the deposition of the King. Unsupported by any great Power, isolated in Europe, Louis Philippe was left to deal with the French people whose confidence he had lost, and towards whom, himself the creation of a popular revolution, he had assumed a wholly false position. The

breach with England had not indeed been complete. On the contrary the French and English had acted together in the affairs of Portugal. They had there intervened between Donna Maria and the rebellious Junta, and calling into action the Quadruple Alliance, originally entered into against the Carlists and Don Miguel, they had mediated in force, reduced the Junta to obedience, and compelled the Queen to accept a Liberal Ministry. But all sympathy between the two countries was gone, and this intervention was somewhat perversely construed by the advanced French Liberals as having been undertaken merely in the interests of the oppressive Government of the Portuguese Crown. Events in Spain still further strengthened this impression. The unhappy marriage had brought with it its inevitable results—grave scandals at once appeared at Court. The Queen and the King had quarrelled and separated. Serano had become the acknowledged favourite of the Queen; and a way had been opened by the weakness and disorders of the Court and Government for the return of Narvaez with Queen Christina, and the re-establishment of the more arbitrary section of the Moderados.

French
intervention in
Portugal and
Spain.
1847.

But although the French Government had thus lost credit with the Liberal party in France, and although the strength of this party was constantly increasing, the Government was still strong in the Assembly, and there was no thought of immediate danger. Some of the more far-seeing statesmen of the time had indeed pointed out the growth of socialistic ideas which might easily herald a revolution, but the comparative moderation of the Opposition leaders, and the readiness with which they yielded to the formal prohibition of a great reform banquet which had been appointed in Paris, gave no indication of the approaching outbreak. It came about in fact almost by accident, and its completion was chiefly due to Louis Philippe himself. The interrupted banquet had dissolved itself into a great procession. Warned by the authorities, the popular leaders again expressed their willingness to give up this demonstration. But crowds collected and slight disorders occurred. It was thought necessary to call out the national guard and the troops. But the national guard declared in favour of reform, and interposed an effectual barrier between the troops and the people. It was a virtual triumph of the mob. Louis Philippe at once yielded, dismissed Guizot, and intrusted Molé with the formation of a government. Some critical hours were wasted in a futile attempt to form an administration, and in the middle of the night the King went a

Deposition of
Louis Philippe.
Feb. 24, 1848.

step further and placed the Ministry in the hands of Thiers and Odillon Barrot. Marshal Bugeaud had already been appointed to the command of the troops, and it seemed probable that were he allowed to act the riot would be quelled. But Thiers and Odillon Barrot, supposing that the movement was entirely political, and ignoring the strength of the social feeling involved, believed that they should be able by their presence to bring the people to order. They therefore sent an order to Bugeaud to postpone the action of the military. The mistake was a fatal one. Thiers and his colleague were ill received by the mob, rendered furious by an affray which had taken place before the Hotel of Foreign Affairs. The bodies of the victims had been carried in a torch-light procession through the streets, and the excitement had become ungovernable. In the morning the crowd pushed on towards the Tuilleries. Urged to resign by many influential men who regarded disaster as inevitable, the King yielded. He appears to have had an invincible disinclination to the use of force. The representative of the popular will, he seems to have regarded it as his duty to withdraw from the throne when that will had declared against him. His personal courage cannot be questioned. He fled in disguise, and his sons also withdrew, leaving the kingdom to his grandson the Comte de Paris, with his mother the Duchess of Orleans as Regent. She betook herself with her sons to the National Assembly, but it was too late. While the members were still debating whether to accept the Regency or to appoint a provisional government, the mob broke into the chamber and settled the matter. The Duchess of Orleans withdrew, and the Provisional Government, of which Lamartine was the moving spirit, became the accepted rulers of the Republic of France.

The rapidity with which this almost bloodless revolution had been accomplished, and the temperance and wisdom displayed amid the first difficulties of the Republic by Lamartine and his colleagues, excited the wonder of Europe, and at once set fire to all the slumbering embers of revolutionary and ultra-liberal sentiment throughout the Continent. The feeling in favour of Liberal reform had already made itself obvious in many directions. It had assumed several forms. In Switzerland the disturbances took the shape of a religious war against the further spread of the power of the Jesuits. In the Italian Peninsula hostility to the Austrian power and a desire for "a United Italy" was the ostensible shape it assumed. In Austria the various nations constituting the composite Empire were looking for autonomy. In Germany, constitutional rule,

Its effect in Europe.

together with the restoration in some form or other of a united Empire, were the chief points in the Liberal programme. Under all these various forms there lay a strong though somewhat hidden force of Republican sentiment, and an uneasy feeling in favour of social changes, which threatened to break down the thin partition which divides reform from revolution. The reforming spirit had already made considerable advances. Sicily was in insurrection. The Pope, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the King of Sardinia had granted Liberal constitutions, and had joined in the national protest against the Austrian occupation of Ferrara. Already in Prussia the King had shown signs of yielding to the popular sentiment.

With all these movements England had sympathised, and Palmerston's support of the partisans of reform in the different countries of Europe had been sometimes carried even beyond the limits of prudence. But the general revolutionary outbreak which followed the events of February changed the aspect of affairs, and rendered the policy of England in the last degree difficult. For a while it appeared as if the established system throughout Europe would give way before the storm. A successful insurrection in Milan against the Austrians was followed by the invasion of Lombardy by the Sardinian king, in which Tuscany and the Pope were compelled to join. An uproar in Vienna drove Metternich into exile. Kossuth, at the head of the Hungarian Liberals, rose in arms. Many of the small states in Germany were compelled to follow the example of the Grand Duke of Baden, and to yield to the pressure of the mob. The King of Bavaria thought it wise to abdicate in favour of his son. In Berlin, though the troops had no difficulty in quelling the riots, the King in his weakness checked them in the moment of victory, and conceded all the demands of the extreme reformers. In Frankfurt, the supporters of German unity established a national Assembly, appointed Archduke John of Austria to the office of Head of the Empire, and plunged Germany into a war with Denmark by claiming as German territory the Duchy of Sleswig.

Still it seemed not impossible that the changes taking place might prove to be acceptable to England. Although they had been attended with a good deal of violence and some bloodshed, as in France so elsewhere, the early part of the movement appeared to be in the direction of the establishment of orderly constitutional rule. The removal of Metternich, and the abdication of various monarchs, did not necessarily imply more than the cessation of arbitrary principles of govern-

Palmerston's sympathy with the Reformers.

Spread of Revolution.

ment. Nor did it seem impossible that in Italy some compromise might be arrived at by which Austria might be induced to give up possessions which were merely a source of weakness to her, and a northern constitutional kingdom established under the Sardinian King. But though England, already free and constitutional in its government, had passed successfully through its difficulties, though the insurrection in Ireland had ended in the contemptible outbreak of Smith O'Brien, and the Chartist meeting had only led to an exhibition of the strength of the governing classes, it was not so in other parts of Europe. The hope of the establishment of governments, at once free and orderly, proved evanescent. The masses, by whose assistance the changes had been secured, looked for something more than a transfer of political power or a mere alteration in the form of government; and the newly created Governments proved unable to resist them. In nearly every country, before the end of the year, it had been found necessary to have recourse to material force for the preservation of order, and a reaction had set in. In France, a terrible outbreak in the first days of June had been suppressed with stern vigour by General Cavaignac, who had been placed at the head of the Government. In Berlin, a succession of weak Ministries had allowed of constantly increasing demands on the part of the Democrats, till at length the Assembly, invaded by the mob, had voted the abolition of the nobility; and the King, roused to action, had placed Count Brandenburg, a Conservative, at the head of affairs, had poured troops into Berlin, and finally (on Dec. 5th), having dissolved the Chambers, had promulgated, on his own authority, a more or less Liberal constitution. The attempt at a re-establishment of German unity had proved a complete failure. Popular riots in Frankfort had shown the powerlessness of the Assembly there. Its rejection of Prussia, the sole Power of sufficient strength to afford it assistance, had left it destitute of material resources. The revived hopes of the Princes strengthened them in their determination to resist the self-effacement necessary for national union, and for the present the question was shelved. In Vienna the revolution had been suppressed by force of arms. The Emperor had thought it wise to withdraw in favour of his nephew, and Schwarzenberg being called to the Ministry, set to work to reconstitute the tottering Austrian Empire. Thus at the close of the year Europe, though in some cases with revised and more liberal governments, still remained in the hands of its former possessors, or, as in the case of France, of rulers with whom the ordinary course of diplomacy might be renewed.

Conservative
reaction
through Europe
at the end of
1848.

Lord Palmerston's management of the Foreign Office under the extraordinary difficulties of the time was a subject of much controversy. There was an apparent readiness to meddle in the affairs of other countries, and to give uncalled for and sometimes dictatorial advice to foreign governments which was very distasteful to the Opposition, and even to some of the Liberal party. And Lord Palmerston was in the habit of acting so independently, and without regard to the advice of his colleagues, that the harmony of the Cabinet seemed at times threatened. But his policy is intelligible, and proved on the whole successful. He was an ardent admirer of constitutional government. He foresaw the difficulties in store for the arbitrary rulers of Europe, and dreaded the revolutionary changes which appeared to him likely to follow if the popular feeling was not in some way assuaged. He was therefore constantly recommending his agents abroad to advise the Courts to which they were accredited to meet the coming dangers by voluntary concession. Of necessity England thus appeared to be sympathising with the aspirations of the Liberals. How little our Foreign Minister was inclined to side with anarchy was not known; and almost inevitably, while at home he was blamed for recklessly intermeddling in revolutionary projects, abroad he laid himself open on the one side to the charge of officious interference with the Courts, on the other of raising hopes among the people he had no intention to fulfil.

Palmerston's
diplomacy
during 1848.

Of the governments threatened by the outbreak of the Revolution in France none seemed in a more dangerous position than that of Spain, nor was there any country where diplomatic agents mingled so freely in the arrangements of party. The return of Narvaez, resting avowedly on French support, had placed power in the hands of the more absolute party. The fall of the Orleans dynasty afforded an opportunity which the Progressistas were not likely to neglect. Accordingly a despatch was sent from the English Foreign Office recommending the adoption of Liberal measures, and Bulwer sought, as the best means of securing order, the admission of some of the Progressista leaders to a share in office. It was not yet clear to the Spanish Minister that England would itself escape the dangers of a revolution. Narvaez was a man of unscrupulous character; the despatch was treated as an insult and sent back to Bulwer, who, himself charged ridiculously enough with joining in revolutionary plots, was abruptly dismissed (May 1848), while Narvaez, forcibly suppressing all opposition, established a government of the most arbitrary description. Bulwer succeeded in entirely

Unsuccessful in
Spain.

vindicating himself at home, and there was no resource left but to put an end to diplomatic relations with Spain. The Spanish ambassador was dismissed from London, and for several years the countries remained totally estranged.

In Switzerland a Conservative and reactionary party, instigated Successful in Switzerland. largely by the Roman Catholic priests and Jesuits, had been very busy ever since the year 1830. In 1844 the Canton of Lucerne had introduced the Jesuits. The Federal Diet had passed decrees against their introduction, and the seven Roman Catholic cantons had found it necessary to form a confederacy among themselves known as the "Sonderbund." This attempt at secession had, in 1846, produced a civil war. The French Government, at that time under Guizot, had tried to combine the great Powers in a conference to modify the Federal compact, and to employ the arbitration of the Pope. Should the propositions of the Powers be rejected it was intended to violate the neutrality of Switzerland, and to compel it by force to accept the views of the great Powers. Lord Palmerston refused to accede to the proposal. He held that in spite of the apparent break-up of the Federal constitution, the independence of Switzerland must still be maintained. While the French and Austrians, with the intention of destroying the Federation, supported the Roman Catholic Sonderbund, Lord Palmerston used the influence of England in favour of maintaining unity under the Federal Diet, and recommended that the Powers should confine themselves to using all their influence to obtain from the Pope the recall of the Jesuits, and to inducing the Sonderbund cantons to declare themselves ready to abide by any decision which the Pope might make. He succeeded in persuading France to accept his propositions for a joint mediation. Meanwhile, the delay which he had occasioned by his opposition to the more violent proposals of the other Powers, enabled the Swiss to settle their own affairs, and the capture of Friburg by the Federal troops put an end to the civil war, and removed the necessity for interference.

But it was to Italy that the chief efforts of Lord Palmerston were directed. Throughout the year 1847 the political ferment had there been increasing, and in November Lord Minto had been despatched with directions to visit most of the capitals and to explain the views of the English Foreign Office. The instructions given him clearly express Palmerston's views. "Her Majesty's Government are deeply impressed with the conviction that it is wise for sovereigns and their governments to pursue in the

Only partially successful in Italy.

administration of their affairs a system of progressive improvement; to apply remedies to such evils as, upon examination, they may find to exist, and to remodel, from time to time, the ancient institutions of their country, so as to render them more suitable to the gradual growth of intelligence and to the increasing diffusion of political knowledge; and Her Majesty's Government consider it to be an undeniable truth that if an independent sovereign, in the exercise of his deliberate judgment, shall think fit to make within his dominions such improvements in the laws and institutions of his country as he may think conducive to the welfare of his people, no other government can have any right to attempt to restrain or to interfere with such an employment of one of the inherent attributes of independent sovereignty." The English envoy was well received, and his mission tended to strengthen the hands of the King of Sardinia, of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and of the Pope. With Pío Nono Difficulties with the Pope. however there were questions at issue which prevented any close relation. For the Pope had refused to exert his authority to restrain the political action of the priests in Ireland, and had issued a rescript against the newly established Queen's Colleges; while on the other hand a Bill which had been brought in for the opening of direct diplomatic relations with the Papal See, though carried through Parliament, had been practically rendered nugatory by an amendment to the effect that no ecclesiastic could be received as the Papal Ambassador. It was in Naples that Lord Minto's work chiefly lay. In January 1848 the Sicilians had broken into insurrection, demanding the constitution of 1812, and claiming the intervention of the English as having had a share in the making of that constitution. The Neapolitan King had also asked England to mediate. Lord Minto ultimately arrived at propositions on which he thought an arrangement might be made, but he did not reach Sicily till after the Revolution in Paris. This event had so excited the Sicilians that they now demanded nothing less than a separation of the two crowns of Sicily and Naples. Mediation was impossible. The question had to be settled by the sword. Messina and Palermo were bombarded by the Neapolitans, and though the intervention of the English and French fleet secured a brief armistice, no arrangement could be arrived at, and the revolt was finally suppressed in the course of the following year.

The difficulties of English diplomacy in Italy were much increased after the establishment of the French Republic. The dangers which Palmerston had foreseen in January had become real. In that month,

in a circular to the English representatives in Italy, he had urged them to point out to the various courts "that the direction of the progress of reform was still in their own hands, but that resistance would lead to irresistible demands."

The Revolution in Milan and Venice, and the appearance of Charles Albert as the champion of Italian liberty at the same time that Metternich was driven from office in Vienna, seemed to threaten the very existence of the Austrian Power, and it was to England—

which, with the exception of Russia, was the only important Government remaining unshaken—that application for assistance was made. Lord Palmerston by no means desired that Austria should be destroyed. He still had a belief in the theory of the balance of power, and thought the presence of Austria necessary in the centre of Europe. It was rather in the belief that the maintenance of an unwilling subject population in Italy was a source of weakness, and that the establishment of an independent Italian kingdom between France and Austria would tend to the establishment of greater stability, that he looked with favourable eyes upon the efforts of Charles Albert. It was with this view that he undertook, at the request of the Austrians themselves, to act as mediator. The first success of the Italians had driven Radetsky the Austrian general behind the Mincio. And Austria was ready to withdraw from Lombardy on the condition that it should take its due share of the Imperial debt. As Venice was already in Italian hands, and as the establishment of a northern kingdom seemed both possible and desirable, Palmerston urged Austria to agree to a total surrender of the north of Italy. But he was aware that the acceptance of such a proposal must depend upon the course of the war. Events proved that Italy was not yet ripe for independence or unity. Co-operation between the States appeared impossible. The Republicans saw with dislike successes which appeared to lead to the establishment of Monarchy. Delay brought renewed strength to Radetsky, and before the middle of August a succession of disastrous defeats had driven the Sardinians again beyond the frontier, and Milan had returned to Austrian hands. The character of the mediation was inevitably changed, but the English minister believed that Austria was still so hard pressed that Lombardy at least might be rescued. The French Republicans were eager to support the Italians, and were only kept back by the hope of a successful mediation, and Palmerston was able by pointing this out to the Austrians to induce them so far to yield as to agree to a con-

The effect of the French Revolution in Italy.

The position of Austria in Italy.

ference at Brussels. But as the affairs of the empire became re-established, as the Hungarians were checked, and the young Prince succeeded to the late imbecile Emperor, the hopes of a favourable arrangement grew weaker. The Sardinians, impatient of waiting, early in 1849 again took the field, and the disastrous battle of Novara (March 24), followed by the bombardment and capture of Venice, extinguished for a while all further hope of Italian independence.

With regard to Germany England could really do nothing. Her policy was confined to giving such encouragement as was possible to the efforts for the reconstitution of the empire. England thus appears during this year as the mediating Power of Europe—the refuge of dethroned kings and ministers, the consistent champion of orderly and constitutional reform—a position won by the proved stability of our institutions and the comparative ease with which the storm which had passed over Europe had been weathered. In spite however of the high position thus taken by England, the year 1849 was not without its grave difficulties.

The state of the Continent, and the part which the English Foreign Office played in the widespread disturbances of the year, afforded a constant ground for party assault. The instructions issued by Lord Palmerston through the Foreign Office to his agents abroad showed that he looked to timely concessions on the part of governments to secure European tranquillity. By the bigoted admirers of what was spoken of as "the cause of order," his despatches were treated as incitements to revolution, while every instance of ready acceptance of change was alleged as a breach of the Treaties on which the European settlement rested. Lord Aberdeen, the late Foreign Minister, supported by Lord Brougham, made himself the mouthpiece of these charges against Government. But in all directions the defence of his conduct offered by Lord Palmerston seemed successful. When charged with allowing ordnance stores to be supplied to the Sicilian insurgents, having explained the circumstances under which it had been done, and that it consisted merely of an arrangement for the convenience of the contractor, he was able to declare that his advice, as tendered by Lord Minto, had been directed to the maintenance of the crowns of the two Sicilies upon one head, that that advice had been demanded by the King of Naples himself, and that probably had it been followed the insurrection would not have taken place. With regard to Northern Italy he was able to urge that he had throughout attempted, in conjunction

Palmerston's defence of his policy. March 6, 1849.

with France, to mediate between Austria and Sardinia, but that he had done his best to impress upon Charles Albert the danger and futility of a single-handed renewal of the war. He declined to be forced into passing judgment on the conduct of the French Government in sending an expedition to Rome. It was indeed very difficult to understand the intention or object of France in so doing. The liberal efforts of the Pope had come to a sudden stop. After the murder of his minister Rossi, he lost all confidence in the people, fled from Rome (Nov. 24), and watched from his retirement in Gaeta the triumph of the popular party, the establishment of a Republic, and the appointment of triumvirs, of whom Mazzini was one. All attempts at reconciliation between himself and his people he harshly rejected. Summoned by Austria, the Catholic Powers began to interfere. Naples, Spain, and Austria put armies in the field against the Roman Republic, and suddenly an expedition under General Oudenot was despatched from France to occupy Civita Vecchia. It was impossible that France should have come openly forward as the upholder of arbitrary authority, but the country was still eager to assert its position in Europe, and Prince Louis Napoleon, now President, had been elected (Dec. 20) avowedly as the champion of order. Already, probably, his views were reaching onward to the establishment of a Napoleonic Empire, to which the maintenance of the Papacy was necessary. He took advantage therefore of the national feeling, and despatched the expedition under the not very comprehensible pretext of saving Rome from anarchy, while pretending to separate himself from the hostile action of Austria. The Republicans demanded to be left alone to fight their own battles; they refused General Oudenot admission to their city. The General declared his military honour involved in occupying the city from which he had been excluded. The consequences were the siege of Rome, its capture (July 1, 1849) after a firm resistance, and the entire annihilation of the Republican movement. But while Lord Palmerston refused to condemn the action of France which led to this result, he pointed out that he had from the first deprecated the intervention of foreign powers in Rome, and regarded the conduct of France as at the least unfortunate.

The best summary perhaps of the views of Palmerston, and therefore of England, at this time with regard to foreign affairs may be derived from his defence of himself when his conduct in Hungary was impeached. In the course of the debate the Radicals had expressed strong indignation against the intervention of Russia for the purpose of suppressing the Hungarian movement, as well as the intervention of France at Rome and had plainly indicated

Palmerston's
speech.
July 21, 1849.

that they considered that the duty of our Government reached beyond verbal interference. Both charges to which Lord Palmerston's policy was open were thus levelled against him; on the one side he was charged with intermeddling and with revolutionary tendencies, on the other with intermeddling without dreaming of supporting his advice by war. In reply he remarked, "There are two objects which England ought peculiarly to aim at, the one is to maintain peace, the other is to count for something in the transactions of the world. It is not fitting that a country occupying such a proud position as England, a country having such various and extensive interests, should lock herself up in a simple regard to her own internal affairs, and should be a passive and mute spectator of everything that is going on around. It is quite true that it may be said, 'Your opinions are but opinions; you express them against our opinions who have at our command large armies to back them. What are opinions against armies?' Sir, my answer is opinions are stronger than armies. I say then . . . that so far as the courtesies of international intercourse will permit us to do so, it is our duty to state our opinions founded on the experience of this country. We are not entitled to interpose in any manner which would commit the country to embark in those hostilities; all we can justly do is to take advantage of any opportunities which may present themselves in which the counsel of order and peace may be offered to the contending parties." As to the other charge, he concludes, "To suppose that any Government of England could wish to incite revolutionary movements in any part of the world, to suppose that any Government of England could have any other wish or desire than to maintain peace between nations and tranquillity and harmony between governments and subjects, shows really a degree of ignorance and folly which I never could suppose any public man could be guilty of, which may do very well for a newspaper article, but which astonishes me to find made the subject of a speech in Parliament."

It was not only in foreign affairs that the ministry encountered difficulty. Its free-trade policy had not as yet been attended by a success sufficiently striking to secure its universal acceptance. Bad harvests, interruption of foreign trade, difficulties remaining over from the commercial crisis of 1847, and the inordinate speculation in railway enterprise had deprived the new system of a fair trial; and although the depression was lessening, it was impossible to say that either the mercantile or the agricultural interest was fully prosperous. The potato blight had reappeared with renewed strength in Ireland, and in spite of the ease with which the

Difficulties of
the year 1849.

insurrectionary movement of Smith O'Brien had been suppressed, terrible suffering and deep discontent, with its usual accompaniment of crime, still pervaded that unhappy country. The ferment in Europe had by no means ceased, and the policy of Lord Palmerston, the wisdom of which was not yet vindicated, was open on all sides to assault. Disorders in our colonies were leading to the conclusion that some revision of our colonial policy was necessary, and a renewed war in the Punjab threatened to destroy the fruits of Lord Hardinge's victories.

Whatever doubt was still felt as to the success of free-trade, the Government at any rate showed its belief in the principle by reintroducing a Bill for the repeal of the Navigation Laws which had been withdrawn in the previous session. The very strict laws passed in the time of the Commonwealth to oppose the competition of Holland had been gradually modified. The produce of Asia, Africa, and America might be imported into the United Kingdom in ships belonging to the country where the goods were produced. European goods might be brought in the ships of any country. Between England and the colonies, and between colony and colony, transportation was restricted to British ships or to ships of the colony in which the goods were produced. It was believed by many—and Adam Smith had lent his great name to the belief—that these restrictions fostered the commercial marine, and therefore indirectly the royal navy, on which the safety of England mainly depended. But free-trade had now been established, and protection withdrawn from the colonies; and it seemed manifestly unjust to free their trade with the one hand and to trammel it with the other. If the colonies were to compete with foreign producers it was necessary that they should obtain the means of transport as cheaply as possible in the general market of the world. To convinced free-traders it was also beyond belief that free competition could in any way tend to the diminution of English nautical superiority. The Bill was carried by a majority of sixty-one in the Lower House. But in the House of Lords its progress was watched with great anxiety, for it was regarded as a test-question with respect to the principles of protection, and the Government were by no means sure of their strength. It was however carried after a warm debate by a majority of ten. This struggle may be regarded as the last direct effort of the protectionists. They had shown that they were still a strong party, but in the course of the debate it had been confessed by more than one that the restoration of the system, at all events for the time, was impossible. Lord George Bentinck, who had served them so well

Repeal of the
Navigation
Laws.

in the great struggle of 1846, had died suddenly in the last year, and a new and far abler leader had been found in Mr. Disraeli. Under his guidance they somewhat changed their tactics, demanding, instead of a renewal of the old system, compensation for the landed interest; and a motion which he introduced in March was the first of many similar attempts leading to the rearrangement of local taxes and the transference of some share of their burden to the general tax-payer. His resolution was negated by a large majority.

The suppression of the insurrectionary movement in Ireland, though relieving it from an immediate danger, had left the country in a very disturbed state. It was thought necessary to renew the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. But it was understood that the opportunity of the tranquillity thus secured would be taken for introducing some important measures as a cure for Irish distress. The Government however did not seem to be capable of forming any scheme of a sufficiently complete character to reach the root of the evil. Poverty and the want of capital were accepted at the time as the main causes of the distress. But Mr. Charles Wood, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a disciple of the strict economic school, had an extreme objection to the interference of Government in commercial matters, and set his face against all plans for the fictitious introduction of capital. His idea seems to have been that the value of land would by degrees become so low under the influence of the enormous poor-rate that it would afford an irresistible temptation as an investment to capitalists. The Government consequently confined itself to measures of a merely temporary character. The terrible amount of pauperism in some districts had, under the operation of the Poor Law, raised the rates to a ruinous height. With this difficulty Government proposed to deal by a grant of £50,000, and by levying upon the whole of Ireland a general rate, known as the "rate in aid," from which the insolvent Unions were to be supported. Sir Robert Peel, on the other hand, while accepting this measure as a temporary alleviation, suggested that the truer policy was to take some steps which, without Government interference, might yet attract capital to Ireland. He developed an elaborate scheme recommending that the distressed districts should be placed under the direct management of a Government commission, and that steps should be taken to facilitate the transfer of land. The reception of this proposal was so favourable, and the feeling that Government was legislating only from hand to mouth so strong, that the Ministry in some degree adopted it,

Measures for
the relief of
Ireland.
July 1849.

The "rate in
aid."
May 1849.

and the Encumbered Estates Act was the consequence. A Bill embodying the same principle had been passed in the preceding year, but had proved inoperative. Romilly, the Solicitor-General, now introduced a very stringent measure by which a commission, superseding for the time the Court of Chancery, removed the obstacles and expenses which the procedure of that Court entailed, and allowed under its authority the easy sale of land, and the establishment of an unquestionable parliamentary title in favour of the purchaser. Its comparative failure has been already mentioned. Though much land changed hands, and capital was thus in a certain degree introduced, the new landlords were even more inclined than the old to employ the powers which the law gave them, and the strict enforcement of which was the chief cause of discontent. It was in fact a plausible effort in the wrong direction, based upon the erroneous belief that the same laws with regard to land were applicable to England and to Ireland, and that the mere introduction of wealthy landlords would establish that friendly relation between them and their tenants which existed in England. It was followed by an attempt to find some further cure for the ruinous character of the Poor Law. Lord John Russell, with the intention of restoring confidence, proposed, along with several other modifications of the law, that seven shillings in the pound should be the maximum rate in any Union. The deficiency which might thus occur was to be supplied either by the "rate in aid" or by a fresh grant from Parliament, or "from those sources from which relief had been given before the introduction of the Poor Law in 1837." The measure was to be accompanied by the resumption of the strict administration of the principle of the English Poor Law and the demand for the workhouse test. The Bill after much discussion was passed, but not till it had been shorn in the Upper House of its most important clause by which the maximum was fixed.

Change in the
Poor Law.
July 1849.

The difficulties of the year had been complicated by a war in India. Mooltan, the capital of the district at the bifurcation of the Sutlej and the Indus, had been one of the latest conquests of the Sikhs under Runjeet Singh. On the death of its first governor his son Moolraj succeeded to his office. But his reputation for wealth induced the Lahore Government to insist upon an enormous succession-duty. Difficulties with regard to the payment of this sum continued, and though for a time the disturbed state of the country had allowed Moolraj to remain at Mooltan, when the country became more settled the claims were renewed.

The Punjab
War.
1849.

An arrangement was at length arrived at, and, as it was believed, accepted by Moolraj, by which the government of the town was to be placed in other hands. Two English officers, Mr. Vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson, were sent with a small native escort to superintend the transfer. They appear to have asked Moolraj somewhat roughly for a settlement of his accounts, and either at his instigation or induced by their own dislike to the interference of foreigners the people of Mooltan, at the close of the interview at which the town had been ceded, fell upon the English officers and severely wounded them. Shortly afterwards the house to which they had retired, and where they lay wounded, was assaulted, and they were both murdered. Moolraj at once put himself at the head of the insurrectionary movement. At first, a local outbreak ostensibly against the native Government of Lahore, the insurrection rapidly grew into a national movement against the English occupation. The country was ripe for rebellion. The chiefs were thoroughly disaffected. The energy of the young English officers who had superintended the native Government, not always with discretion, had alienated the people. Signs of the coming danger had been visible at Lahore, and it had been thought necessary to remove the Queen-mother as a centre of disaffection into English territory. The English Government was at first inclined to treat the matter as a local disturbance, and no immediate advance of troops was made. But a young officer, Lieutenant Edwardes, employed in the settlement of the revenue in the neighbourhood, had thought it his duty at once to collect what troops he could lay hands on, and, calling to his aid the Khan of Bahwulpore, an English ally to the south of Mooltan, had after some successful skirmishes confined the insurgents to the immediate neighbourhood of Mooltan; unable to act against the town itself without reinforcements, he had applied to Sir Frederick Currie, the English Resident at Lahore, for help. Currie, still maintaining the fiction that the insurrection was local, had sent him a strong body of Sikh troops under Shere Singh (who was among the most prominent of the Sirdars), as well as some siege guns under General Whish, thus enabling him to lay siege to the town. He seemed on the point of success when the desertion of the whole Sikh force under Shere Singh obliged him for the time to suspend his operations, and made it evident that the Sikh nation had seized the opportunity to attempt again to throw off English influence, and that the Punjab would have to be reconquered. The scene of the great struggle was to the north-west of Lahore, between that capital and the passes

Insurrection at
Mooltan.
April 1848.

vict.

N

leading to Cabul and Afghanistan. The Sikhs in their eagerness had laid aside their old quarrels with the Afghans and persuaded Dost Mahomed to send troops to their assistance and to occupy Attock.

To meet this alarming combination English troops were at once assembled at Ferozepore; and in November Lord Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, advanced at the head of 20,000 men to the Chenab. Gough, a vigorous and successful soldier, and capable, as was subsequently proved, of commanding well, was hasty and incautious. An attempt to cross the river without proper precautions produced the battle of Ramnugur—a victory indeed, but so dearly bought and so ineffective that it was little better than a defeat. Though the river was crossed, the only result was the removal of the enemy to a strong position on the Jhelum. The battle was fought on the 22d of November. On the 21st of January Whish succeeded in reducing Mooltan, and the troops which had been employed there were at liberty to join the main army.

Battle of
Ramnugur.
Nov. 22, 1848.

But before this, on the 13th, Gough had fought a great battle at Chillianwallah. He had made all fitting dispositions for fighting the battle on the 14th, but the Sikhs, having fired upon his camp, had roused his temper, and he had hastily plunged at once, late in the evening and with wearied troops, into a battle. It had been a terrible slaughter, in which both armies claimed the victory. Seldom had a despatch been received with more anger and dismay than that which brought the news of this battle to England. A cry arose on all sides for the removal of the impetuous general, and the immediate appointment of Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Sindh. In spite of a good deal of opposition from the Court of Directors, the Government felt obliged to yield to the cry, acting under the advice of the Duke of Wellington; and although suffering under a mortal disease, Napier accepted the appointment, and within a few hours left England to take it up. Before he arrived, however, Gough had re-established his reputation. Strengthened by the army under Whish from Mooltan, which had marched up with extraordinary rapidity, he brought the united Sikh and Afghan troops to an engagement at Goojerat, and there neglecting no precaution, and using to the full his artillery, he completely routed the enemy with little or no loss, showing by this success how thoroughly his late disaster was traceable to his indiscreet haste. Under Sir Walter Gilbert the pursuit was pressed with extraordinary rapidity. The Afghan allies withdrew into the passes, the Sikhs recognised that their force was completely

Battle of
Goojerat.
Feb. 21.

broken, and on the 14th of March the remnant of their army laid down their arms.

The merciful attempt to allow the native government to reform itself under English guardianship had entirely failed. It seemed obvious to Lord Dalhousie that any further steps in the same direction would be unwise, and he proceeded at once to annex the Punjab. The Maharajah Dhuleep Singh was handsomely pensioned and brought over to England, while the Punjab itself—placed first under a Board consisting of John and Henry Laurence and Mr. Mansel, and subsequently under the sole rule of John Laurence—became a model of a well-governed English province, and in subsequent times of great danger the stronghold of English power in India.

Annexation of
the Punjab.
Mar. 29, 1849.

The difficulties of the previous year had been so far overcome that the Ministry, in the Queen's Speech with which the session of 1850 opened, were able to give a tolerably successful account of the nation. Free-trade had begun to tell its tale, and trade was steadily reviving; the revenue showed a handsome surplus; the value of the exports had risen in the course of the last year nearly £10,000,000; pauperism had decreased; and the prices of the necessaries of life were low. There was indeed progressive improvement in the condition of the working-classes. Public attention had for some years been, by the spread of the cholera, attracted to the insanitary state of the dwellings of the poor; great efforts and great improvements had been the consequence. The Sanitary Commission which, even as early as 1842, had published its report, had shown how large was the amount of illness which it was possible to prevent, and in 1847 and 1848 several important Bills—the Towns' Improvement Act, the Public Health, and the Nuisance Removal Act—had been the result. The Public Health Act of 1848, which was founded chiefly on the recommendation of Mr. Chadwick and Dr. Southwood Smith, the authors of the first sanitary report, had established a general Board of Health to carry out the curative measures necessary; and its success had been emphasised by the comparative ease with which the cholera, which had reappeared in 1849, had been met and combated. In Ireland, too, there was an appearance of unusual tranquillity. It was perhaps rather specious than real, the effect of exhaustion caused by the late terrible disasters. Nor had the opportunity been thoroughly or wisely used. Yet for the instant much was hoped from the action of the Encumbered Estates Bill, and the temporary lull of agitation.

Prosperous
state of affairs.
1850.

There was however a confessed depression in the agricultural interests, the protectionists still formed an important party in opposition, and the foreign policy of the Government, conducted by Lord Palmerston, still afforded a constant opening for attack. On the other side, the demands of the Charter, no longer pressed by external agitation, began to make themselves heard in a more formal and practical manner in the House, and it was plain that the question of further reform of the constituencies would soon become prominent. But the question of protection appeared to have been practically settled in the late defeat sustained by the Opposition in the repeal of the Navigation Laws. The amendments to the address moved by the country party in both Houses were defeated by large majorities, and the attempt of Disraeli to obtain by a revision of the burdens of the Poor Law some indirect advantages to the landed interest met with the same fate. The movement on behalf of a reform of the constituencies, of which Mr. Hume made himself the spokesman, proved also to be as yet not ripe for success; and the resolution in favour of Household Suffrage, Triennial Parliaments, and the Ballot, which he introduced, was negatived by 242 to 96. A somewhat colourless Budget, showing a calculated surplus of a million and a half, gave rise to a good deal of discussion with regard to the employment of this surplus, and allowed room for a motion by Mr. Cobden for the reduction of expenditure. But the Government was able, though sometimes by small majorities, to resist the amendments of the Opposition, and little was done beyond a small diminution of the principal of the public debt, and the removal of the tax on bricks with the intention of facilitating the improved housing of the working-classes.

Foreign affairs and the state of our Colonies were the points round which the interests of the year centred. In the course of the last few years public attention had been drawn in not altogether a pleasant way to the subject of our colonial policy. General causes, such as constantly increasing emigration and the desire to cut down the national expenditure, had gone hand in hand with disputes and incidents of a somewhat threatening character, to excite public interest in a subject but too often regarded with indifference. An insurrection in Ceylon had been suppressed with questionable severity, and Lord Torrington, the Governor, was said to have passed an Act of Indemnity for himself by his own casting vote. Similar exhibitions of overstrained authority had taken place in the Ionian Islands. In British Guiana, thwarted by the governor in attempts at retrenchment, the Assembly

Attention
drawn to the
colonies.

had stopped supplies, and the colony had been almost brought to ruin. From Australia increasing complaints of the government had been made. Both Australia and New Zealand had refused any longer to serve as penal settlements, and to accept the offscourings of England. The attempt to land convicts at the Cape had produced something closely resembling a rebellion. The Queen's ship, with the convicts on board, had been refused all intercourse with the shore, and been compelled to sail away with its living cargo. And in Canada, a serious uproar had arisen in Montreal. Lord Elgin, the Governor, had given his assent to a Bill to indemnify the inhabitants of Lower Canada for the losses inflicted on them by the insurrection of 1837 and 1838. The British party, Loyalists, as they called themselves, had broken into riot. Parliament House had been burnt, the houses of the Ministers pillaged, and a petition got up for the removal of the Governor, and to entreat Parliament to disallow the Bill, which was stigmatised as a means of rewarding rebels at the expense of the community. A declaration had even been put out advising the annexation of the Canadas to the United States. In the words of Sir William Molesworth, "From every quarter, north, south, east, and west, charges were brought against the present Secretary of State for the Colonies, of injudicious appointments, ignorance, negligence, vacillation, breach of faith, and tyranny."

But although the complaints were levelled against Lord Grey, thinking men who took interest in the subject were fully aware that it was not the individual Minister, but the system which was to blame. It was seen that it was impossible that the wishes, interests, and aspirations of rising colonies in every corner of the globe should be understood or answered by any single head of a department resident in London. It was inevitable that disputes should arise in countries governed, as our colonies then were, by nominee councils and an executive over which the people had no control. An association had been formed for colonial reform. The solution which it offered was the establishment of self-government in the colonies, and as complete a command of local questions lodged in the hands of the colonists themselves as was consistent with the maintenance of Imperial interests. At last, in the session of 1850, Government, which had resisted all private efforts at reform, found it necessary to undertake the business themselves, and Lord John Russell introduced a Bill for the better government of the Australian colonies. After a rapid sketch of the history of the colonies, and a declaration of his determination to preserve, for the present at least,

Desire for
reform of the
Colonial Office.

the colonial empire, he pointed out that the late complete destruction of the system of commercial monopoly had entirely altered the position of the colonies, which had been originally founded principally for the maintenance of that system. Upon this ground he confessed

Russell's
Australia
Constitution
Bill.
May 13, 1850.

that he thought it right that many of them at least should be allowed separate constitutions. He refused however, on the plea of impossibility, to draw the sharp line which the more advanced reformers desired between local and imperial questions. But while thus reserving the power of the veto in all cases to the home Ministry, he proposed the establishment of a legislative body in each of the Australian colonies (now for the first time separated), with power to introduce such changes in their constitution as they thought fit, and an executive responsible to the colonial Parliament. Objections were made to the form of constitution offered and to the want of definition of Imperial rights. But as the colonists were given the power to change their constitution, the objection was really of little weight, and practically the common-sense of the Government has prevented any difficulty from arising as to what the colonial legislature might or might not handle. The Bill in fact was a long step in the right direction. It was the recognition of the principle that, whenever it was not forbidden by circumstances, the best way of securing the friendship of the colonies and maintaining the unity of the Empire was to be found in giving them the complete management of their own affairs. It forms the beginning of that system of local responsible governments which at present exists in all our chief colonies.

The strictures upon the management of the Colonial Office had been very severe; but it was throughout felt that although some mismanagement might be attributable to Lord Grey, it was rather the system than the man that was to blame. With regard to foreign affairs the case was almost reversed. It was Lord Palmerston himself against whom all attacks were directed. It was the way in which the policy was carried out, rather than the policy itself, which seemed open to objection. Full of self-confidence, mistrusting in diplomacy the effect of combined management, such as would be afforded by the Cabinet, Lord Palmerston had kept foreign affairs much in his own hands. It must be confessed also that he allowed his strong prejudices to influence his political action. A profound mistrust in France and French diplomacy, and a strong abhorrence mingled with some contempt for the arbitrary Powers of Europe, coloured all that he did. A firm belief

Attacks on
Palmerston's
foreign policy.

in the excellence under all circumstances of the political arrangements of England, and of the superiority of Englishmen, tended still further to give a dictatorial and meddlesome character to his diplomacy.

In a certain sense successful—for undoubtedly the position of England among nations was very high—in the actual production of its object, if that object was constitutional rule, it had signally failed. The reaction in the course of the year 1849 had been complete, and the prospects of constitutional advance were very dark. All insurrectionary movement in the two Sicilies had been suppressed. The victory of Novara and the fall of Venice had re-established Austrian supremacy in the north of Italy, and her troops had been instrumental in crushing the rising liberty of Tuscany, of Parma, and Modena. The French had restored the power of the Pope in Rome. Meanwhile, under Schwartzberg, Austria had been attempting to centralise its dominions. The Magyars of Hungary, clinging to their old constitution, though checked in their advance upon Vienna, had regained their superiority in the field. The stirring eloquence of Kossuth excited them to firm resistance, while the Polish Generals Bem and Dembinski made successful head against the Austrian arms. In an evil hour for itself the Austrian Court summoned to its assistance the Czar; and 150,000 Russians added to the Austrian troops proved more than the Hungarians could resist. The surrender of their last army under Georgey completed their defeat, and their leaders fled for refuge to Turkey. In Germany the effort at reconstituting the Empire had broken down. While the Republican feeling, which had gone hand in hand with the desire for national union, had driven the Assembly at Frankfort to foolish extremes, the jealous rivalry of Austria and Prussia, equally desirous to secure the first place in any new federative arrangement, and the refusal of the Princes to annihilate themselves for the advantage of their common fatherland, had prevented any reasonable settlement. Prussia had felt itself obliged to refuse the Imperial crown. The greater Princes had withdrawn their deputies from the Frankfort Assembly, which had moved to Stuttgart, and on the 18th of June its meeting had been suppressed by the soldiers of the King of Wurtemberg. A fresh outburst of revolutionary zeal which had followed upon these events had produced an insurrection in Baden. But when this was crushed by Prussian, Federal, and Bavarian troops, the revolution was over, things fell back again into their old position, the Princes forgot

Complete
European re-
action of 1849.

all their promises of constitutional government, and the dynastic reaction was complete.

Throughout this troubled period, the most which English diplomacy had been able to undertake had been mediation and advice, directed to moderate in their own interests the severity of the successful reactionaries. But the popular sympathy was doubtless with the party of progress. The cruelty with which the Austrians exercised their renewed authority, and the masterful intervention of Russia, rendered this feeling more acute. It was fully shared by Lord Palmerston, who lost no opportunity of giving it effect when he could do so without bringing the country into war. Such an opportunity was found in the demand of Russia and Austria that Turkey should deliver up the Hungarian fugitives. To this demand Turkey gave a firm refusal, but offered to send them out of the country or to keep them safely at a distance from the frontier. The Ambassadors of Russia and Austria at once broke off diplomatic relations, and it seemed not improbable that Turkey would be forced into war with its powerful neighbours. It applied to England and to France for assistance, which was immediately and effectively given; for in refusing the demand the Turks were certainly justified. The Russian Ambassador in London indeed acknowledged that by treaty while the Emperor had a right to make the demand, the Turks had a right to refuse it. The English Government sent a remonstrance to the

English fleet sent to the Dardanelles, Oct. 1849.

Russian Court, and to accelerate its movements the English and French fleets were ordered to the Dardanelles. They even, contrary to the Treaty of 1841, entered the Straits; but this error was speedily corrected, and was alleged to have been due to stress of weather. Neither Russia nor Austria was inclined to press the matter further, the demand was withdrawn, and after a while such of the refugees as had not become Mahomedans left Turkey for America and England. Though the difficulty had been arranged without recourse to arms, the feelings of the Czar had been much shocked, and a permanent hostility to England excited in his mind.

France had in this case acted cordially as our ally, but the next exhibition of English vigour seriously threatened the alliance. Greek

Bad government in Greece.

independence had been established under the joint guardianship of Russia, France, and England. Constitutional government had been guaranteed. It had however been constantly delayed. Otho, the Bavarian Prince, who had been placed upon the throne was absolute in his own tendencies, and supported by the absolute Powers; and France, eager to establish

her own influence in the East, and seeing a road to that object rather in flattering the hopes of Greece for increased territory than in support of good government, had sided with the Absolutists, leaving England the sole supporter of constitutional rule. The Government and administration were deplorably bad. One Prime Minister, Coletti, had been himself little better than a leader of brigands. Justice was of a violent and arbitrary sort, and the judges were dependent on the Ministry. Any demands raised by the English against the Government, and the bad administration afforded abundant opportunity for dispute, were certain to encounter the opposition of the King, supported by the advice of all the diplomatic body. Such questions had arisen. Ionians, claiming to be British subjects, had been maltreated, the boat's crew of a Queen's ship roughly handled, and in two cases the money claims of English subjects against the Government disregarded. They were trivial enough in themselves; a piece of land belonging to a Mr. Finlay, a Scotchman, had been incorporated into the royal garden, and the price—no doubt somewhat exorbitant—which he set upon it refused. The house of Don Pacifico, a Jew, a native of Gibraltar, had been sacked by a mob, without due interference on the part of the police. He demanded compensation for ill-usage, for property destroyed, and for the loss of certain papers, the only proof as he declared of a somewhat doubtful claim against the Portuguese Government. Such claims in the ordinary course of things should have been made in the Greek Law Court. But Lord Palmerston, placing no trust in the justice to be there obtained, made them a direct national claim upon the Government. For several years on various pretences the settlement of the question had been postponed, and Palmerston had even warned Russia that he should some day have to put strong pressure upon the Greek Court to obtain the discharge of their debts. At length, at the close of 1849, his patience became exhausted. Admiral Parker, with the British fleet, was ordered to the Piræus. Mr. Wyse, the English Ambassador, embarked in it. The claims were again formally laid before the King, and upon their being declined the Piræus was blockaded, ships of the Greek navy captured, and merchant vessels secured by way of material guarantee for payment. The French and the Russians were indignant at this unexpected act of vigour. The Court of the Czar found in it an opportunity for revenging itself for the late action of England with regard to the Hungarian refugees, and sent and published a strongly worded and threatening despatch

Claims of English subjects disregarded.

English fleet sent to the Piræus, Jan. 1850.

to Lord Palmerston. The French, on the other hand, displeased at the idea of the matter being settled without reference to themselves, made an offer of their good offices as mediators. The offer was accepted; but on the distinct understanding that neither the principle involved, nor, except in certain cases, the amount demanded, were to be subjects of discussion. Their emissary was to use his influence to persuade the Greeks to meet the claim. Should he fail, England was to be free again to have recourse to its own means of coercion. Baron Gros was

French mediation unsuccessful.

the emissary sent. During his negotiation the blockade was suspended. He reached Athens on the 5th of March, and after six weeks of delay and argument—during which, as Palmerston thought, he had constantly passed the limits of mediation, and adopted the position of arbitrator—on the 21st of April he declared that his negotiation was unsuccessful. But the French, disliking a treaty contracted under English guns, had meanwhile employed their Minister in London, Drouyn de L'Huys, to agree with Lord Palmerston upon a Convention, settling the terms on which the quarrel might be ended. The Convention was agreed to on the 18th of April. A steamer had been sent from France informing Baron Gros of the probability of such a Convention; it arrived on the 24th of April. But no corresponding information had been sent to Mr. Wyse. He therefore refused to renew negotiations

Greece yields to force. April 1850.

through the French, again proceeded to coercive measures, and on the 26th the Greek Government yielded. The French thus found that after all the business had been concluded without their participation. As Palmerston pleaded that the delay which had occurred in communicating with Mr. Wyse as to the Convention was the effect of accident, the French demanded that the accident should be corrected, and that the Convention and not Mr. Wyse's terms should form the basis of the final agreement. Lord Palmerston, on the other hand, thinking that on the withdrawal of Baron Gros from the negotiation England had again entered on her full rights, justified Mr. Wyse in renewing the blockade, and held to the arrangement then made. In extreme anger the French charged him with duplicity and recalled their ambassador from England. The matter was too small to cause any risk of war; but the Cabinet thought it so serious as to require some concession, and finally on all points not already completed the Convention was accepted.

For the time this trumpery little affair caused the greatest excitement, and being regarded as a typical instance of Lord Palmerston's management of the Foreign Office, it formed the ground of a very seri-

ous attack upon the Government. In the House of Lords in a great debate in June the foreign policy of the Government was arraigned, and Lord Palmerston was accused of having alienated the whole of Europe. His constant interference on behalf of the Liberals, it was said, had set in array against us the absolute Powers of Europe, without in any way advancing the cause of liberty, for on all sides those absolute Powers were for the time successful. His conduct had not even been consistent. The national aspirations of the Duchies of Holstein and Sleswig had not been supported. Anxious, with much show of reason, to attach themselves to the German nation, they had found assistance in the Assembly of Frankfort and the Prussian King. But England had throughout, while assuming the part of mediator, favoured the maintenance of the unity of the Danish dominions, and thus our position, both with regard to Prussia and to all those desirous of German unity, had been injured. The appearance of the fleet in the Dardanelles, contrary to treaty, had excited the hostility of Russia and Austria, and now, while alienating our one real ally, France, we had exhibited ourselves in the odious attitude of a bully, and laid ourselves open to reproaches so insulting as those of the Russian despatch of February. The resolution condemnatory of our foreign policy, supported by Lord Stanley and Lord Aberdeen, was carried by a large majority.

Had Lord John Russell thrown over Palmerston it might have been regarded as a personal attack; but he was too true to his friends and too constitutional in his views to adopt such a line. It became necessary to take some steps to vindicate Government. This was managed by the introduction by Mr. Roebuck of a resolution, declaring the approval of the House of Lord Palmerston's management of foreign affairs. The debate which ensued, and which lasted four nights, is one of the most celebrated on record. At length Palmerston rose, and in a speech of nearly five hours' duration defended the whole course of his administration, a speech which is said to have been more admirable than convincing, but which, at all events, had the effect of obtaining for Government a majority of 46, and of retaining Lord Palmerston in office; while by its essentially manly and English tone it won for him that strong popularity which subsequently rendered him so exceptionally the Minister of the nation. It drew from Sir Robert Peel the observation that "It has made us all proud of him." Yet Sir Robert Peel had

Attack on Palmerston in the House of Lords. June 17, 1850.

Palmerston's defence in the Lower House. June 25, 1850.

spoken against the resolution. Nor is it possible to say that a policy which allied against it such men as Starley, Aberdeen, Canning, Sir James Graham, Sir William Molesworth, Sidney Herbert, Gladstone, Cobden and Peel, was not open to some stricture. But in fact Lord Palmerston, conservative in many of his tendencies, was in his foreign policy democratic. Judged from the point of view of the ordinary statesman, who saw in England only one of a group of nations arranged upon dynastic principles, the policy which had, as a matter of fact, shocked every Court in Europe, could not but be blameworthy. From those who regarded England as the guardian and champion of the great idea of liberty, and from those also who rightly or wrongly considered it the duty of England to raise a constant protest in favour of its own position, the policy could scarcely fail to elicit warm admiration.

The debate of June 28th was remarkable, not only for the triumph of Palmerston, but because it was the last occasion on which the voice of Sir Robert Peel was heard in the House. The next day, while he was riding up Constitution Hill, he was thrown from his horse, and received injuries which speedily proved fatal. Sir Robert Peel was a typical English statesman, not gifted with that insight, that comprehension of the contest of forces with which he is surrounded and its probable outcome which makes the great man, but ready to treat with admirable sagacity and practical power each question as it arises; not a leader of public opinion, but ready to accept and throw into its best form opinion already ripened, and by skilful interweaving of the new and old, saving the country from the disastrous results of sudden innovation. In the first part of his life he was hampered by the creeds of his youth and entangled with party ties. He opposed with a tenacity not creditable to his foresight the removal of disabilities from the Roman Catholics and the reform of the constituencies. But after the passage of the Reform Bill he appears to have reconsidered his position. From that time onward it is difficult not to recognise in him the national statesman rather than the party leader. Under the English system it was impossible for him to use his influence without a party at his back. His attachment to the fundamental structure of the constitution, and his dislike to rapid change naturally allied him with the Tories. But reconstituted by him the party ceased to be merely obstructive, and not without some mistrust found itself led into a course of moderate and progressive advance. Although it is difficult to point out the exact moment at which his views were formed, it is evident

Death of Sir
Robert Peel.
June 29, 1850.

that he recognised in the middle-class the real element of national strength, and shook himself free from the aristocratic and territorial influences of his younger days. It was upon this view that he rested his financial and commercial policy. The production of wealth and (as far as was consistent with the principles of political economy which he had embraced) the well-being of those who produced it appeared to him to be the objects an English statesman should pursue, implying, as they did to his mind, the maintenance of stable order and a friendly and peaceful attitude towards other countries. He apparently hoped to educate by degrees the party which he led to accept the financial system which would secure these ends, and of which the repeal of the Corn Laws was a part. The terrible outbreak of famine and disease in Ireland, which, as is evident from his letters, moved him deeply, drove him from this course, and obliged him suddenly to offer the completion of the system to his friends as yet untrained to accept it. It was the belief that he was charged with the fate of England, and not of party, which allowed him, though not without much effort, to break loose from his political relations, to forego, as he well understood must be the result, all further hope of office, and to submit to the bitter assaults with which he was assailed. The position which he regarded himself as holding when in office he continued to hold after his fall. The consistent friend and wise adviser of the Liberal Ministry, to whom alone the carrying out of his ideas could be intrusted, he passed his last years in anxiously watching the effect of what he had done, and, without a following and without office, remained to the end of his life the most respected and powerful statesman in the country.

The triumph of Palmerston in the late debate, and his maintenance in the position of Foreign Minister, was a matter of some moment, for war was still raging between Denmark and the Duchies of Sleswig and Holstein; and in the course of the autumn there appeared to be every probability that Prussia and Austria would come to blows. The legal position of the Sleswig-Holstein question is intricate, the principle at issue very simple. The inhabitants of Holstein and a considerable portion of those of Sleswig, speaking the German language, desired to be admitted to any new form of confederation arrived at, and the upholders of the unity of Germany were eagerly determined that this junction should be effected. It would appear that legally Holstein had always been a German fief, Sleswig nearly always a Danish fief. But an old law had declared that Sleswig should always be joined to Holstein, and the law of suc-

The Sleswig-
Holstein War.

cession allowed the female line in Denmark but forbade it in Sleswig. These were the technical grounds on which Sleswig claimed to follow Holstein into the German Federation. A guarantee in 1721 by France and England of the Duchy to Denmark formed the technical ground for the action of the Danish Government. The Prussians had offered themselves as the instruments of Germany. Their troops had not only occupied the Duchies but had invaded Jutland, from which, however, they had been forced to retire by the interference of the Swedes,



and an armistice between Denmark and Prussia had been concluded at the close of the year 1848. The war had continued after the termination of the armistice, negotiations of various kinds had been entered into, and at length, on the 2nd of July 1850, under the mediation of England, a Treaty of Peace between Denmark and Germany was contracted. The question with regard to the Duchies was left for future settlement, and England joined with Austria, France, and all the

Baltic Powers in a Protocol on the 4th of July, declaring their wish that the integrity of the Danish monarchy should be preserved. Resting upon such large support, when the Duchies continued the war the King of Denmark invaded Sleswig, defeated General Willisen, a Prussian officer in command of the troops of the Duchy, at Idsted, and again at Friedericistadt, and brought the war to a conclusion when Willisen and the other Prussian volunteers, by whom the war had been mainly kept up, withdrew. Their withdrawal was chiefly due to the calling out of the Prussian army. Throughout the year the rivalry between Prussia and Austria had been becoming more pronounced. The old Diet of the Confederation had resigned its powers to the Assembly of Frankfurt. Austria supposed that the restoration of the old Diet, of which she was the acknowledged chief, followed as a matter of course upon the dissolution of the Assembly in June 1849. Prussia, on the other hand, summoned at Erfurt representatives of as many of the German Principalities as it could collect, for the purpose of constituting a new Confederation of which it was itself to be the head. There were thus two rival German Parliaments. No progress however was made at the Erfurt Conference, and Austria considered the reconstitution of the Frankfurt Diet as a triumph for itself. At one moment war appeared inevitable. The Elector of Hesse Cassel withdrew before a constitutional opposition, caused by his arbitrary misgovernment, and sought assistance from Austria. Prussia could scarcely avoid supporting the constitutionalists and moved an army into the country. Fortified with the support of the Czar, who had been summoned to mediate, Austria sent troops to reinstate the Elector. The rival forces were thus face to face. But hostilities were postponed by a convention signed at Olmütz, by which, at the price of large concessions from Prussia, the settlement of open questions was referred to joint commissioners of the rival powers. But meanwhile the Prussians thought it prudent to put their army on a war footing.

In the German quarrel England had no very direct interest. But the Queen, or rather Prince Albert—who busied himself much in foreign affairs,—saw with displeasure the action of Palmerston with regard to Sleswig-Holstein. Strongly imbued with admiration for German unity, and regarding the leadership of Prussia as necessary for the success of that object, the Prince disapproved of the anti-German policy of the Protocol of July. The divergence of Lord Palmerston's views from those of the Court, and still more his off-hand manner of conduct.

England joins
the Protocol in
favour of
Denmark.
July 4, 1850.

Convention of
Olmütz.
Nov. 29, 1850.

ing business, produced an incident which foreshadowed the crisis of the following year. The Queen thought it necessary to communicate to Lord Palmerston, through the Prime Minister, a memorandum, requiring him to state distinctly what he proposed in any given case, in order that she might know to what she had given her consent; and, secondly, that having once given her sanction to a measure it should not be arbitrarily altered or modified. Such an act, she said, she "must consider as failure in sincerity towards the Crown, and justly to be visited by the exercise of her constitutional right of dismissing the Minister." It excites surprise that, after so strongly worded a memorandum, Lord John Russell should still have allowed Lord Palmerston to remain at the Foreign Office, or that Lord Palmerston himself should have wished to do so. No doubt the memorandum embodied a true constitutional view. If the Sovereign, as the permanent element of the executive, is to be of any weight in the Government, it must be in securing as far as possible continuity in our relations with foreign countries, and as all communications with foreign Courts are carried on in the name of the Sovereign, it is but reasonable that he should at least be thoroughly informed of what his Ministers are doing. There is indeed no sign that the Queen, or her chief adviser, Prince Albert, ever relaxed their loyal adhesion to constitutional maxims. Yet there was a prevalent feeling that the Court might and did exercise a sinister influence on the foreign policy of England. It was impossible to forget the close family relationships which connected the crowned heads of Europe, or to avoid the suspicion that the views of the Sovereign were somewhat coloured by a natural, nay an inevitable sympathy with the interests of the reigning class.

It was only when Prince Albert devoted his great abilities and love of culture to questions of a more social character that he was regarded by the people in general as occupying his proper place. In everything relating to the improvement of the physical condition of the people and to the spread of science and art, he exhibited the warmest interest, and a great idea was now occupying his mind. In the year 1849 he had conceived the plan of

a great International Exhibition of the works of industry, to be held in the course of the year 1851. It was believed that all nations would gain advantage by an interchange of experience, and obtain a knowledge both of the requirements and achievements of other countries necessary for success in the increased competition which improved locomotion was rendering

The Queen's
Memorandum.
Aug. 1850.

The Great
Exhibition.

inevitable. The plan had found favour generally, both among the manufacturers of England and abroad. Commissioners had been appointed to carry it out. The difficulty of erecting with due rapidity and due attention to beauty a building vast enough for the purpose had been solved by the adoption of Paxton's plan for a palace of glass; and shortly after the close of the Parliamentary session the still further difficulty of finding a fitting site was met, though only after much opposition, by the appropriation of a portion of Hyde Park for the purpose. The completion of this plan was in some respects the most important event of the following year. It was opened on the 1st of May, with a magnificent and effective ceremony. The fear which had been excited lest the concourse of people brought to London should be dangerous, proved entirely groundless. Foreigners were struck with the ease with which a few policemen kept the crowds in order. Nor was the anticipation felt by some that the anarchists of Europe would seize the opportunity for riot in any way realised. In all respects, in the striking character of the building, in the wealth and variety of the products exhibited, and the excellence of the arrangements, it was a marked success. It was visited by 6,000,000 people, and after the payment of all expenses there was a large surplus remaining in the hands of the Commissioners, by whom it was invested in an estate at South Kensington. On this a museum and schools for the advance of art were built, which have continually grown till they now play a very important part in the national education. The results of the Exhibition in a more direct sense were no doubt important. It proved the forerunner of many collections of a similar character, both in England and other countries, the effect of which has been largely to accelerate the equalisation of commercial advantages, and to bring about that great industrial struggle in which all countries engaged in manufactures of a similar kind are now involved.

But while the Commissioners for the Exhibition were still busy in making arrangements for the coming year, an event occurred, trivial enough in itself, but which caused an excitement which drove for a while all more serious questions into the shade. This was the issue of a Papal Bull establishing a Romish hierarchy in England with territorial titles. "We do hereby decree," it says, "the re-establishment in the kingdom of England, and according to the common laws of the Church, of a Hierarchy of Bishops deriving their titles from their own Sees." This Bull was issued on the 24th of September, and fell upon a public already somewhat excited

Results of the
Exhibition.

The Papal Bull.
Sep. 1850.

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upon ecclesiastical questions. The Crown had appointed in 1847 the Rev. George Gorham to the living of Bramford Speke in the Diocese of Exeter. The Bishop, Dr. Phillpotts, after insisting on examining Mr. Gorham very closely upon his faith, had declined to institute him, declaring his views heretical with regard to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. The Court of Arches had sustained the action of the Bishop, but this judgment, when brought by appeal before the Privy Council, had been reversed. This tribunal was a lay tribunal. While therefore the Evangelical party rejoiced at the

Excitement
about Mr.
Gorham's case.
June 1850.

maintenance of Mr. Gorham's doctrine, which was generally speaking their own, and even Churchmen of the older school were pleased at the rebuff given to Episcopal interference which they disliked, the Tractarians and High Churchmen of the newer school were filled with anger, not only at the apparent admission of a doctrine less strict than their own, but at the intervention of a lay court in a question, the settlement of which they believed the spirituality alone had the right of handling. The quarrel was carried to the Queen's Bench, to the Common Pleas, and finally to the Exchequer, but always with the result that the judgment of the Privy Council was upheld. To not a few, the efforts of the High Church party appeared to be nothing less than a serious assault upon the supremacy of the Crown. Thus when the Papal Bull appeared, it was very generally interpreted as a step in the same direction. It was supposed that the Pope would not have ventured to issue it had he not believed that the High Church party were becoming powerful, and that their doctrines led (as in many individual instances had been the case) direct to the adoption of the Roman doctrine. Full of these feelings, the Prime Minister on the 4th of October wrote a letter to the Bishop of Durham, stigmatising "the late aggressions of the Papacy upon our Protestantism as insolent and invidious." His alarm however, he said, was not equal to his indignation; he felt that England was strong enough to repel any outward attacks. But there was a danger which alarmed him much more than any aggression of a foreign sovereign: "Clergymen of our own Church who have subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, and acknowledged in explicit terms the Queen's supremacy, have been the most forward in leading their flocks 'step by step to the very verge of the precipice.'" The letter was regarded as a sort of proclamation against

Cardinal
Wiseman's
appeal.
Oct. 1850.

both the High Church and the Roman Catholics. Cardinal Wiseman, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster published an appeal to the English people

justifying the recent measures, and explaining that they consisted in mere matters of ecclesiastical discipline. But his appeal served rather to increase than to allay the storm. The conduct of the Irish clergy too, who had in Synod denounced the late effort at improving Irish education as irreligious, and who had not scrupled even to discuss the question of land tenure in a spirit hostile to the Government, had roused general indignation. The feeling in England showed itself in clamorous meetings and in addresses to the Crown poured in from all quarters. The excitement continued and increased up to the very time of the opening of Parliament in February, when the Queen's Speech declared the intention of the Ministry to maintain the rights of the Crown, and to lay a measure before Parliament for that purpose. The measure made its appearance as the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. Its object was to prevent the assumption of territorial titles by the Roman Catholic Bishops. Leave was given by a very large majority to introduce the Bill. It was plain that the popular feeling entirely favoured it. But the minority, though small in numbers, was important in ability. An evident determination was shown, both on the part of the Radicals and of the Peelites, to throw obstacles in the way of the Bill; certain clauses had to be omitted, and when after the Ministerial crisis it was reproduced, though carried by large majorities, it was in fact little more than an idle protest.

Ecclesiastical
Titles Bill.
March 1851.

The crisis which interrupted the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, although signs were not wanting that the Ministry was in some difficulty, came as a surprise. It was the effect rather of general weakness than of distinct defeat. The budget was produced on the 17th of February. With a considerable surplus in hand, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had offered only to repeal a portion of the window-tax, which was highly unpopular, and at the same time to continue the income-tax. His statement was so badly received that the defeat of the Government seemed almost certain. But the actual cause of the crisis was a vote taken a few days later, in a very thin house, on a motion by Mr. Locke King to assimilate the county franchise to that of the boroughs. The question of electoral reform had become pressing, and Lord John Russell offered to introduce a measure for extending the suffrage. In spite of this, however, Mr. Locke King proceeded to a division, and in opposition to the Government obtained leave to bring in his Bill by a majority of fifty. Conscious of their weakness, and preferring to resign upon

Ministerial
crisis.
Feb. 20.

this point, where their defeat had been pretty plainly accidental, to suffering complete discomfiture upon their budget, the Ministry determined to resign. The state of parties rendered the formation of a new Ministry a matter of great difficulty. The Peelites, pledged to oppose the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, would not join the Whigs, nor could they stand alone, especially in the face of the general feeling in favour of that Bill. But they were equally resolute not to combine with Lord Stanley and the Protectionists, who without them were unable to form a Ministry. After a considerable delay and much negotiation, as it proved impossible to form any successful combination, the old Ministry returned unchanged to office. Having thus obtained a new lease of life, Lord John Russell was able to pass his Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. A new budget completely repealing the window-tax, and on the amendment of Mr. Hume continuing the income-tax for a year only, was carried. And amid the excitement caused by the great Exhibition the session quietly came to an end without further difficulty.

But the real source of the weakness of the Ministry—the mistrust of Lord Palmerston felt by the Queen and Prince Albert, and the difficulties with foreign courts excited by his self-asserting method of doing business, still remained. The arrival in October of Kossuth, the late leader of the Hungarian Revolution, from his exile in Turkey, again brought these difficulties into prominence. Kossuth and his friends were received with enthusiasm by the English Liberals. His eloquent speeches inculcated the principle that foreign interference with the constitutional arrangements of a country was wholly inadmissible, and that to prevent it other countries were bound to combine and take up arms. The natural deduction from this was that England was called upon to protect the Hungarians from the assaults of Austria and Russia. Listened to and admired by multitudes in England, such speeches could not fail to cause great displeasure to the despotic Powers attacked in them. Those Powers ranked nominally among the friends of England, and although the Government could not of course dream of suppressing the expression of opinion, it certainly could not openly give its countenance to the opinions expressed. When Lord Palmerston therefore apparently with difficulty refrained from receiving Kossuth himself, and listened with approbation to addresses from the Radicals of Finsbury and Islington, in which the Emperors of Austria and Russia were spoken of as “odious and detestable assassins,” he appeared to be going some way towards compromising

The Russell
Ministry retain
office.
Feb. 24, 1851.

Kossuth in
England.
Oct. 1851.

the position of England. His conduct was formally condemned by the Cabinet on the 4th of December.

But before that time much graver events had occurred which threw such slight peccadilloes into the shade. On the night of the 1st and the morning of the 2d of December, the French President, Prince Louis Napoleon, had carried out a *coup d'état* which upset the existing Republican constitution in France, established for a while a military despotism, and led directly in the course of a few months to the establishment of the Second Empire. The Republican Constitution of 1848 was not of a character to be lasting or to work easily. More especially was this the case in France, where undoubtedly among the middle-classes, and those possessed of property, there was a strong disposition in favour of some form of monarchy. In their desire to establish constitutional balance, the constitution-makers had so arranged the powers of the Chambers and of the President that a conflict between them was inevitable. During the whole of the year a struggle had been going on. Every law tending at all to increase the power of the President had been opposed, though the unsettled state of the country seemed to call for a strong executive. But it was generally believed that the crisis would be postponed till the following May, when, according to the Constitution, a new President would have to be elected. It was certain that a large majority of Frenchmen would have wished to re-elect the Prince. But by the Constitution he was not capable of re-election, nor was there any means of changing the Constitution without the concurrence of two-thirds of the Chamber, which was of course unattainable. But Prince Louis was not only an ambitious man, he had also passed his life in meditating upon the career of his great uncle, and had brought himself to believe that it was his destiny to follow his footsteps as the ruler of France. It was not to be expected that a man of this character, feeling the support of the nation behind him, would quietly allow himself to pass into obscurity at the close of his tenure of office. He had undoubtedly been taking steps to secure his re-election as well as great constitutional changes. He had filled some of the more important offices—the Ministry of War, the Prefecture of Police, and the command of the troops about Paris—with adventurers on whom he could rely, and in whose hands, almost without expecting it, he became a mere puppet. He had secured the friendship of the army, already irritated by an attempt in the Chamber to place a civilian at its head, and had declared himself in favour of universal suffrage. It seems possible that the intention of

The Coup
d'État.
Dec. 1, 1851.

the hostile majority of the Chambers to take some unconstitutional action against him had come to his knowledge, that he had heard of some plot in which the Orleans princes were implicated. This may have decided him to proceed at once to a counter-stroke. At all events, at the end of November, careful and secret preparations were made, and on the night of the 1st of December the State printing office was secured, troops were brought into Paris, many of the leaders of the Chambers and the more important generals were apprehended in their houses, and when the morning broke the walls were found placarded with proclamations declaring the intentions of the President, and promising a new Constitution, of which the outlines were given. In the course of the day the Legislative Assembly was cleared by the troops, all the members present being carried off and imprisoned. The people, left without leaders, taken entirely by surprise, made but a slight resistance. Some barricades were thrown up but were captured without difficulty. Yet the change of government was not effected without terrible bloodshed, for the troops in the boulevards (whether upon instruction, or of their own motion, it can never be known), fired volley after volley upon the peaceful bystanders in the streets, and into the windows of the houses. No quarter was given, and those prisoners who were taken were put to death in cold blood. Whatever may be thought of the political aspect of the *coup d'état*, the underhand stealthy manner in which it was planned, the mean and selfish character of its perpetrators, the cold-blooded and calculating ferocity with which it was executed, stamped upon the reign of Louis Napoleon a character of vulgar and unprincipled adventure which clung to it even in the time of its greatest prosperity, and checked all feelings of regret at its miserable downfall.

But of course it was as a political event that foreign governments had at first to regard it. As it has for many years been a fixed principle of English policy to allow nations to settle their own constitutional matters themselves, there could be no question as to what the conduct of the Government must be. Lord Normanby, our ambassador, was instructed by Lord Palmerston in a short, formal despatch, draughted in accordance with the decision of the Cabinet, "to make no change in his relations with the French Government." This was written on the 5th of December, two days after Normanby had applied for instructions. The despatch was not intended to be shown to the French Minister, Turgot, but only as instruction for himself. Lord Normanby did however communicate it to M. Turgot, apologising for the delay.

Palmerston's
despatch to
Normanby.
Dec. 5.

Turgot replied, somewhat nettled at any doubt as to the English position being raised, that the delay made no difference, especially as he had received from Walewsky, his own ambassador in London, information that Lord Palmerston had expressed his full approbation of what had been done. This Lord Normanby communicated in a public despatch, which came of necessity to the notice of Lord John Russell and the Queen. The Premier at once wrote to Palmerston, asking him to explain how he came thus to have expressed in private, and before consulting his colleagues, so definite an opinion on the matter. But Lord Palmerston allowed a day to pass before writing his reply. He was busily employed during the interval, and among other things, wrote a despatch which he did not show to the Cabinet, informing Lord Normanby that in his opinion the success of the President was desirable for France. Very late that night, the 16th of December (he was unable to write till past four in the morning) he replied to Lord John Russell in a long letter, giving the grounds of the opinion he had expressed, at the same time saying that Walewsky had given a highly coloured account of his words. To this Lord John replied that the question was not what his opinion was, but whether he ought to have given any opinion without taking the orders of the sovereign. Palmerston replied by stating that he had given the opinion as a private individual, and that friendly intercourse with foreign ambassadors would be impossible if all expressions of private opinion were forbidden. The Premier at once cut the discussion short. "No other course," he wrote, "is left me than to submit the correspondence to the Queen, and to ask her Majesty to appoint a successor to you in the Foreign Office." At the same time he offered Palmerston the position of the Viceroy of Ireland, which, it is needless to say, he declined with some sarcasm. As Lord John Russell and other members of the Cabinet had expressed in private conversation to the French ambassador the same views as those held by Lord Palmerston, it was evidently not any disagreement as to the policy to be pursued which caused his dismissal. Nor apparently did Lord John Russell fail to recognise the difference between the public and private utterances of Ministers. But the independence of action which Lord Palmerston had always employed, and which he appears to have thought necessary for the efficient transaction of foreign business, had been long distasteful to the Queen and Prince Albert. The Premier was not unnaturally displeased at the apparent disregard of his remonstrance shown by the despatch of

Correspondence
between
Russell and
Palmerston.

Palmerston's
dismissal.
Dec. 19.

the 16th. The whole incident seemed to show Lord Palmerston's determination to pursue his own course, and the opportunity was taken to give effect to the long-cherished wishes of the Court.

The news of what had happened was received with a cry of triumph by the reactionary party abroad. Schwartzberg is said to have held a *fête* to celebrate it. It remained to be seen, when the necessary explanations were given on the reassembling of Parliament, what the verdict of England would be. The attack of Lord John Russell upon

his colleague is described as singularly powerful. In his defence Lord Palmerston delivered a speech far below his usual standard. In fact Russell had acted scarcely fairly. Having distinctly told Palmerston that the cause of his dismissal was his conversation with Walewsky, he brought up against him a variety of charges drawn from his former conduct, strengthening them by reading the Queen's memorandum of 1850, and closing them with the assertion that Palmerston's despatch of the 16th of December, having been sent without the knowledge of the Queen or Cabinet, broke the conditions mentioned in the memorandum, and laid him open to dismissal. Palmerston, though he hinted at the fact that Russell had sinned equally with himself with regard to Walewsky, felt bound in honour not to bring the ambassador's name forward as his witness. His repartee therefore wanted all point. In the same way he thought it impossible to explain his reasons for submitting so quietly to the memorandum of 1850. He neither liked to emphasise the delicacy which had led him to regard that memorandum, not only as a letter from a sovereign but from a lady, and therefore to submit to it, nor to explain the fact that had he resented it the triumph he had just gained by his great vindication of his policy in the House would have been destroyed. In fact he seems to have thought it wiser to put up calmly with the assault made upon him, and await a future opportunity of reasserting his position. The opportunity came soon enough. The Ministry, already weak, was unable to bear the loss of its ablest member. Immediately after bringing in a Reform Bill, in accordance with his promise the preceding session, Lord John

Militia Bill
brought in.
Feb. 16.

Russell produced a plan for the reorganisation of the militia. The defence of the country had become an object of paramount interest. The *coup d'état* carried out by the aid of the French army, and in the name of a Napoleon, had excited general alarm. Men asked themselves whether a Government resting on this footing would not be obliged to recall something of the Napoleonic tradition and vindicate its position by war. There was

a general feeling that the means for the defence of the country had been too long neglected. While deprecating, therefore, the idea that he was acting under panic, the Premier thought it a good opportunity for introducing his Bill. It was received with general approbation, although a few of the stricter economists objected to the additional expense. The necessity for a reserve force was urged by no one more fully than by Lord Palmerston; but he disapproved of the determination of the Government to make the newly organised militia local instead of general. Lord John Russell indeed explained that in case of war the embodied militia would be available for employment wherever their presence might be required. But Lord Palmerston persisted in his objection. "If this were so," he said, "the title of the Bill appeared to be a misnomer"; he therefore introduced an amendment by which the word "local" was struck out. Lord John Russell somewhat hastily declared that were this amendment carried it would imply want of confidence in the Ministry. When therefore a majority of eleven appeared in favour of Lord Palmerston's views the Ministry had no choice but to resign. Little or no surprise was felt. The Ministry had been growing gradually weaker, and it was understood that the first opportunity offered would be taken for its resignation.

The Russell
Ministry
resign.
Feb. 20, 1852.

CHAPTER IV.

LORD DERBY'S MINISTRY, February 26, 1852.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Derby.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord St. Leonards.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Lonsdale.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Salisbury.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Disraeli.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Walpole.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Sir John Pakington.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Malmesbury.
<i>Secretary at War,</i>	Mr. Beresford.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Duke of Northumberland.
<i>President of the Board of Control,</i>	Mr. Herries.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Henley.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Lord Hardwicke.
<i>First Commissioner of Works,</i>	Lord John Manners.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Eglington.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Blackburne.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Lord Naas.

ON the fall of Lord John Russell's Ministry, the Queen intrusted Lord Stanley (who had now become the Earl of Derby) with the formation of a Conservative administration. He found no difficulty in the task, and although lacking the support of a certain majority in the Lower House, undertook to carry on the business of the country without a dissolution. The leadership of the House of Commons was intrusted to Mr. Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Walpole became Home Secretary, Sir John Pakington Colonial Secretary; the management of Foreign Affairs, which since Lord Palmerston's dismissal had been in the hands of Lord Granville, fell to Lord Malmesbury, hitherto untried in office. The course of the new Ministry was at first clear enough. Putting aside for the present all idea of Parliamentary reform—for which indeed at the moment there was but little general wish—they were able to pass a Militia Bill by overwhelming majorities, and to carry further the colonial policy already accepted by giving a constitution to New Zealand. Nor under the circumstances could

Lord Derby's
Ministry.
Feb. 26, 1852.

The Militia Bill
carried.
June 21.

constitution
218

they well avoid accepting, at all events temporarily, the financial policy of their predecessors, and producing a Budget in accordance with it.

But in his speech after his acceptance of office, Lord Derby had made assertions which led to the belief that he still regarded protection as both desirable and possible; and this was known to be also the opinion of the bulk of his supporters. It thus became necessary that the nation should have an opportunity of declaring its opinion upon this point. Immediately upon the close of the Session on the 1st of July, Parliament was dissolved, to reassemble upon the 4th of November. The result of the general election was decisive on the question. The balance of parties was but little altered; there was certainly not that strong expression of opinion in favour of a return to protective finance which Lord Derby himself recognised as necessary to justify it. As the expression in the Queen's Speech was ambiguous, as many of the election addresses had distinctly upheld protection, and as neither Lord Derby nor Mr. Disraeli had as yet made any definite declarations, it was thought necessary by the free-trade party to set the matter at rest. Mr. Villiers, the old champion of free-trade finance, introduced a resolution in which he declared that "the Act of 1846 had improved the condition of the country, particularly of the industrial classes; that it was wise, just, and beneficial; and that the extension of the policy of free-trade would most contribute to the prosperity, welfare, and contentment of the people." The wording of this resolution gave great umbrage to the Protectionists. To accept it was to declare the unreasonableness, and worse than unreasonableness, of their violent assaults upon Sir Robert Peel. Of all his assailants Disraeli had been the bitterest. He attempted therefore to parry the blow by a counter resolution, in which the improvement in the state of the country was admitted, and while the words in praise of the measure of 1846 were omitted, the duty of the House to adhere to the policy once deliberately adopted was allowed. But the free-traders were not contented with the mere admission of facts; they desired some vindication of Sir Robert Peel's conduct. Nor did they think it fair that his chief assailants should be intrusted with the duty of formulating the national opinion on the matter. It was impossible to force their views upon the House, but they had at least the satisfaction of hearing on all sides words of respect and commendation for Sir Robert Peel, and could not but feel the full pleasures of triumph when they heard Sidney Herbert declare that "the

Mr. Villiers' resolution in favour of free-trade.
Nov. 23.

memory of Sir Robert Peel requires no vindication, his memory is embalmed in the grateful recollections of the people of this country ;" or when they listened to his words as, pointing to the Treasury Bench, he concluded, "If a man wants to see humiliation he need but look *there*." The difficulty was solved by Lord Palmerston, who introduced an alternative amendment, embodying the free-trade resolution with the omission of the word "just." The sharpness of the sting being thus mitigated, the large majority of the House proved willing to accept the amendment, and it was carried by 468 to 53. A resolution similar in tenour was carried in the Upper House, and the long struggle as to the main principle of our commercial legislation seemed thus to be finally set at rest.

Lord Palmerston had by his amendment saved the administration. Its acceptance of the principle of free-trade allowed the Government to continue a little longer in office. But the Conservatives, more numerous than any other single party, were still in a minority of the whole House, and liable to be overthrown if at any time a combination should be formed against them. The financial policy which they would adopt under the restrictions which late events had laid upon them was a matter of extreme interest, and it was felt that the fate of the Ministry depended on their Budget.

Disraeli's
Financial
Proposals.
Dec. 3.

It was opened by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a brilliant and elaborate speech of many hours' duration, but it appeared upon examination to be rather clever than sound. Mr. Disraeli had taken for his text the late resolutions of the House, had found means, while apparently acting in the strictest accordance with them, to introduce into his scheme what was intended for a large compensation to the landed interest. Open competition and the removal of taxation upon the prime necessities of life were the principles of the day. Tea and beer were prime necessities of life ; he would therefore greatly lower the duty on tea and give up half the malt-tax. Direct taxation to take the place of such reductions was the main point of Sir Robert Peel's policy, now so much admired. The income-tax should therefore be continued, and extended partially to Ireland, and a direct tax upon houses carried downwards, so as to affect houses rated at £10 instead of £20, the existing limit. But the income-tax was avowedly not exactly fair. In Ireland funded and real property alone should be subject to it, and in England the tenant farmers, instead of being rated at one-half their rent, should be rated at only one-third. In these arrangements the malt-

tax and the remission of the farmer's income-tax were distinctly intended as compensation to the landed interest. The deficit caused was to be filled by a direct house-tax, falling almost entirely upon the inhabitants of towns.

Though the brilliancy of the speech in which it was introduced, and the cleverness and variety of the scheme itself, attracted for the time considerable admiration, it soon became apparent that the Budget would meet with determined opposition upon all sides. In the first place, the estimated surplus was not sufficient to call for a remission of taxes. It was merely a readjustment which was suggested. The remission of indirect taxation is, generally speaking, only advisable when the increased consumption of the taxed article will make up for the decrease of the duty. As far as tea was concerned this was probably the case. But with regard to the malt-tax, not only was it very questionable whether increased opportunities of purchasing beer were in themselves desirable, but also in the existing state of the brewing trade, which is a virtual monopoly, it seemed pretty clear that there would be no great extension of consumption, no great diminution in the price of beer, no great advantage to the malt-grower, but a very considerable advantage to the brewer, for whose interest £2,500,000 of revenue, easily collected and generally approved, would be sacrificed. Again, the house-tax, extended as it was to be, laid a heavy pressure on the lower middle-class, which could not fail to render it a most objectionable form of revenue. The modifications of the income-tax, although in accordance with the views of some of the best economists, were joined with an extension of its action, which was now to affect incomes arising from property of £50 a year, and excited the opposition therefore of those financiers—at the head of whom was Mr. Gladstone—who regarded as impossible any attempt to distinguish the sources from which income came, and those also who, like Mr. Cobden, disapproved of any further pressure upon small incomes. At the same time the free-trade party as a whole could scarcely avoid seeing in the arrangements suggested a clever use of their own principles as a means of retaliation upon themselves. A general assault was therefore made upon the Budget. For four nights the debate was continued.

On the 16th of December the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to reply. Feeling probably that the result of the division could not be in his favour, he threw aside all restraint, retorted upon his adversaries in bitter language and with a licence to which Parliament was

at that time unaccustomed, and closed his speech by a declaration that he was the victim of a coalition, that England did not love coalitions, and that any Ministry formed on such a principle was certain to be short-lived. His speech called forth a severe and dignified rebuke from Mr. Gladstone; and in this characteristic manner the sharp hostility between those statesmen, which was subsequently to be the very groundwork of English party politics, took its rise. The division showed a majority of 19 against Government. Lord Derby at once resigned, and the Coalition Ministry which Disraeli had foreseen came into power, the Cabinet being composed nearly equally of Whigs and Peelites, under the premiership of Lord Aberdeen.

During the brief Ministry of the Conservatives two events had happened, one seeming to mark the close of a chapter of past history, the other full of significance for the future. On the 14th of September the Duke of Wellington breathed his last at Walmer Castle. He had reached the great age of eighty-three, but still retained almost unimpaired his mental powers, and was able to execute the duties of his office as Commander-in-Chief. It is unreasonable to speak of the death of a statesman at so ripe an age as a great national loss. Yet the position held by the Duke was one which no other man could fill, and was not without its value to the State. The greatness of his services, his well-known honesty and single-hearted patriotism, and his large experience, had raised him above the sphere of party contest; and the Sovereign had found in him a calm and trustworthy adviser in all matters of difficulty, and a friend on whose loyalty to herself and to the constitution she could implicitly rely. His death naturally called to mind the greatness of his career, and all parties and all classes vied with one another in their expressions of admiration for his life and regret at his loss. It was determined to honour him with a public funeral, and to lay the remains of her greatest military leader beside those of the favourite naval hero of England under the dome of St. Paul's. The ceremony was carried out with striking completeness. Detachments from every regiment in the army formed a funeral procession more than a mile in length, which preceded and followed the magnificent car on which the body was borne, and the more pathetic emblem of the riderless charger and the empty boots of the great Duke, through a densely packed crowd estimated at more than a million and a half of orderly sympathisers. The solemnity of the scene in the Cathedral as hour by hour the great multitude waited in silence, broken only by

The Derby
Ministry
resign.
Dec. 16, 1852.

Death of the
Duke of
Wellington.
Sept. 14, 1852.

the sad blare of the military trumpets playing the "Dead March in Saul," was unrivalled as a State ceremony, and in this instance the ceremony was a true expression of the national regret.

Of a very different character was the second event. On the 1st of December Lord Malmesbury notified to the House of Lords the recognition by England of the newly established French Empire. That the Prince-President intended from the first to adopt this title had appeared certain. But it was necessary that he should feel his way and discover the amount of support on which he could rely in France before he did so. Throughout the year it had been becoming more and more obvious that however blameworthy the execution of the *coup d'état* may have been, the principle involved in it had been accepted with joy by the great bulk of the French nation. It appealed to the selfish interests or sentimental desires of nearly every class. While the army looked for glory at the hands of a Napoleon, the mercantile class hoped for increase of material wealth under the strong government which was promised, the Church saw in the "saviour of society," as they did not scruple to say, a man of God appointed to remove the evils of sixty years' revolution; and even the workmen were flattered by the fictitious importance which universal suffrage and the use of the *plébiscite* seemed to give them. Thus, when in the autumn the Prince undertook a progress to feel the national pulse, he was everywhere hailed with indications that the change from the present incongruous form of government to the better understood and more clearly defined character implied by the Empire would be accepted with enthusiasm. In accordance with this experience he obtained, as was necessary under the constitution he had established, a "senatus consultum" making him Emperor, and intrusting to him the power of settling the succession in the House of Bonaparte, should his own direct descendants, legitimate or adopted, fail. The "senatus consultum" was referred to the people, and by them accepted by an enormous majority. Upwards of 7,000,000 supported the Empire, less than 300,000 voted against it.

There was no reason why England, in accordance with its habitual policy, should not accept the new Government, with the exception perhaps of the title assumed, which was that of Napoleon III.; as this implied hereditary succession from a sovereign whom England had never acknowledged, it was thought necessary to explain that no claim to hereditary right was intended—that it was merely the assertion of a fact, and that the Emperor based his right

Napoleon III.
proclaimed
Emperor.
Dec. 1, 1852.

Effect on
England.

unconditionally on popular choice. The explanations were attended with the strongest assertions of friendship for England, of the peaceful character of the Empire, and the desire to maintain in all its fulness the existing alliance with the country. No doubt the assertions of friendship were real, for the great empires of the east of Europe were not likely to accept so easily the claims of the upstart monarch, and the support of England was of the last necessity to him. The uses to which he put it, and the somewhat disastrous effects which it exercised upon England were not long in showing themselves. Already the necessities of his position had driven the Emperor into a course of policy in the East which was fated to involve England in all the difficulties and disasters of the Crimean war.

CHAPTER V.

LORD ABERDEEN'S MINISTRY, Dec. 27. 1852.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Aberdeen.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Cranworth.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Granville.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Duke of Argyll.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Gladstone.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Lord Palmerston.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Duke of Newcastle.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord John Russell.
<i>Secretary at War,</i>	Mr. Sidney Herbert.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Sir James Graham.
<i>President of the Board of Control,</i>	Sir Charles Wood.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Cardwell.
<i>First Commissioner of Works,</i>	Sir William Molesworth.
<i>(No office),</i>	Lord Lansdowne.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord St. Germans.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Brady.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Sir John Young.

The following changes subsequently took place :—

<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Clarendon, Feb. 1853.
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On the separation of the departments in June 1854 :—

<i>War Secretary,</i>	Duke of Newcastle.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Sir George Grey.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord John Russell.

THE construction of the new Ministry was a matter of very considerable difficulty. The late Government had been defeated by Whigs and Peelites combined ; it was not evident to which party the leadership of the new Cabinet by right belonged. Besides this there was much hostility between Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, the acknowledged leaders of the Whigs ; while Lord Aberdeen, the leader of the Peelites, had always been Lord Palmerston's chief opponent in foreign affairs. The Queen, well advised, sent for the chiefs of both parties, Aberdeen to represent the Peelites, and Lansdowne, whose position and authority was above question, to represent the Whigs. On Lord Lansdowne's absolute refusal to undertake the duty, the formation of

vict.

P

Aberdeen's
Ministry.
Dec. 27, 1852.

the new Ministry was intrusted to Lord Aberdeen. The amalgamation of parties, implying the exclusion from important office of a certain number of those who had distinct claims to it, was not easily effected. The chief obstacle to be overcome was the rivalry of the Whig leaders; but at length, with Palmerston at the Home Office and Russell as Foreign Secretary, the Cabinet, in which the Peelites were perhaps too strongly represented, was formed. Like other coalition ministries, it suffered from an excess of individual ability. The discrepant views and rival pretensions of its members, though at first veiled under a discreet silence, gave no promise of enduring stability to the Ministry.

Pending the development of the Eastern question, which had as yet reached only an early stage, the new Ministry, "a Ministry of progress, without principles and without party," as Mr. Disraeli described it, proceeded at once to vindicate its title by the introduction of various reforming Bills. A Bill for removing the disabilities of the Jews met its usual fate; carried in the Lower House, it was rejected by the Lords. The relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland, of much importance in the presence of a Tenant Right Association existing in that country, and with which the late Ministry had attempted to deal, were referred to a Select Committee with a view to subsequent legislation. The legislature of Canada, in spite of the warm opposition of the Tory and Church party, was allowed to deal freely with the "Clergy reserves," or in other words to settle its own ecclesiastical affairs irrespective of any monopoly enjoyed by the English Church in Canada. And, though no Bill was introduced, an elaborate survey of the intentions of the Government with regard to education was given by Lord John Russell, who, while declaring himself the advocate of great freedom of education, stated that neither he nor the present Government could ever be a party to a plan proposing merely secular teaching.

But naturally, having been called to office by the failure of their predecessors' Budget, it was to the financial policy of the new administration to which public attention was chiefly directed. It afforded opportunity when produced after the Easter recess for one of those great Budget speeches for which Mr. Gladstone became so remarkable. Before bringing in his Budget he introduced propositions for the simplification and reduction of the National Debt. By conversion of certain minor stocks, by the issue of exchequer bonds at long date, and by the establishment of a new 3 per cent. stock, he hoped to make a considerable saving to the country. His resolutions were accepted, and he then proceeded

Gladstone's
Budget.
April 1853.

to explain his financial projects. In conspicuous contrast with the clever but complicated scheme of his predecessor, he kept in view as his chief object simplicity of arrangement. The revenue of the country was in a good condition. Even with considerably enlarged estimates for the present year, it seemed pretty certain that there would be a surplus of £700,000. But this was but a small margin on which to act. Before proceeding to remit taxes it would, he said, be necessary to see whether the reconsideration of the existing taxes would not enable the surplus to be increased. At the head of these stood the income-tax. He pointed out in some brilliant sentences the important part this tax had played in times of difficulty, and exhorted the House for the present at all events to continue it; and while confessing that there were certain inequalities in the tax which rendered its permanent maintenance as a part of our financial system questionable, he yet declared that any attempt to readjust it, or as he expressed it, "to nibble at it," would produce failure. The undue pressure of the tax upon certain classes of income was not, he said, so great as was often supposed, for although the rate paid was the same on all, practically the land paid a larger proportion than trade, and both land and trade largely more than professions. He proposed that incomes between £100 and £150, hitherto untaxed, should in future be charged, though at a lower rate, and that the tax should be extended to Ireland. In this way there would be a not inconsiderable addition to the public revenue; but still greater would be the effect of a readjustment, upon fair principles, of the legacy duties, "a tax which left wholly untouched the intelligence and skill of the country, giving more than the relief aimed at by the reconstruction of the income-tax without the danger attending that reconstruction." He proposed also an addition to the duty on spirits and on brewers' licences. By these means he hoped to acquire a sufficient surplus for his purposes. He desired the abolition of the duty on soap at a net loss of £1,110,000, the establishment of a uniform duty of one penny upon all receipt stamps, a large diminution in the duties levied on life assurance, on apprenticeships, and on the certificates of attorneys, and the reduction of the advertisement duty from 1s. 6d. to 6d. He rearranged the assessed taxes, making them as few, as simple, and as uniform as possible. Then proceeding to the tariff and pursuing the free-trade principles now established, he proposed a very large lessening of the duty upon tea (which in less than two years should descend from 2s. 2d. to 1s.), and upon thirteen articles of food, while upon some 256 articles the duty was either to be wholly removed or largely reduced. The

loss of taxes for the year he estimated at £1,656,000, the new taxes at £1,344,000, the surplus in hand at £805,000, leaving for the coming year a surplus of £493,000. He then concluded by explaining that he had good ground for believing that the income-tax might, if Parliament thought fit, be dispensed with in 1860. He went in detail through the probable increase of permanent sources of income, and showed that they would amount in that period to a sum equal within a very little to the product of the income-tax. So large and comprehensive a scheme necessitated much discussion. Nearly every part of it afforded opportunity for party opposition. But with the exception of a few slight amendments it was carried (May 2) triumphantly through both Houses, and the position of the Ministry appeared unusually strong.

The victorious close of two little wars was also a subject for satisfaction. The lawless violence of the native Governor of Rangoon had produced in 1851 the outbreak of the second Burmese war, which had been conducted, though not without difficulty, with such success that the Governor-General of India had declared the annexation of the province of Pegu and had established the English Government there (Dec. 20, 1852). From that time a series of disorderly contests, sometimes with the troops of the King of Ava, sometimes with organised robbers known as Dacoits, had been carried on. But at length, in February and March 1853, defeats had been inflicted both on the regular troops and upon the Dacoit bands, and in June the termination of the war was officially proclaimed. No formal peace was made; but as the King of Ava made the concession demanded and declared the navigation of the Irawaddy free, the Governor-General considered this substantial proof of his acquiescence sufficient. During the same period a frontier war had been carried on in South Africa against the Kaffirs. Sir Harry Smith, to whom it had been intrusted, had met with no great success. He had been superseded by General Cathcart. Acting with more energy, he had succeeded in obliging the most formidable of his opponents, Sandilli, to sue for peace. Pardon was offered to the vanquished chief and to his people upon condition of their resigning entirely their old country called the Amatolas, and living in peace in another portion of British Kaffraria. These terms they felt themselves compelled to accept, although they complained that the allotment was too small for them. The rivers Kye and Orange thus became the fixed boundaries of British Kaffraria to the north and east. Immediately upon the conclusion of the war the constitution which had been granted to Cape Town was formally proclaimed.

Success of the
Burmese and
Kaffir wars.
1853.

Behind the seeming prosperity there lay a grave cause for anxiety in the quarrel which had arisen between the Czar of Russia and the Porte. The ostensible origin of this quarrel was a dispute between the Latin and Greek Churches for the custody of the sacred places in the Holy Land. From the days of Francis I. France had from time to time been in close friendship with the Turkish Empire, and had not unnaturally undertaken the duty of watching the interests of the Latin Church. In the sixteenth century the holy places had by treaty been placed in the hands of the Latins. But a considerable majority of the subjects of the Sultan belonged to the Greek Church, and as the habit of pilgrimage played a far more important part in their religious life than in that of the Latins, they were in fact more interested in the right of free access to the holy places. The possession of them was also a matter of deep interest to the whole vast population of Russia. The Czar undertook therefore the same duties with regard to the Greek Church as the French Government had undertaken with regard to the Latins, with this difference, that while to the one it was a matter rather of nominal and diplomatic honour, to the other it was a matter of real and vital importance. Almost necessarily, as Russia obtained influence in Turkey, the Greek Church had obtained privileges and immunities which were scarcely in accordance with the old treaty rights of the Latins. Disputes had constantly arisen between the rival churches in Jerusalem. But the Turks had contrived to keep the question in their own hands, and to produce some sort of concord, when in 1851 a French agent, Monsieur de Lavalette, was instructed to make good in their full extension the rights of the Latins. The instructions given him were in accordance with the position of Louis Napoleon, who was seeking to appear as the champion of order and eager for the support of the ecclesiastical party in France. Opposition from the Russians necessarily followed, and the Porte found itself in a difficult position between the claims of two powerful nations. Eager to please both parties, it was at once led into a course of contradictory actions. While a formal note in January 1852 acknowledged the validity of the Latin claims, a firman in the following month revoked this note and confirmed the Greek privileges. But having granted the firman the Ministry of the Sultan did not publish it, and the matter having now become one in which the national representatives of France and Russia were deeply interested, great pressure was brought to bear by the Czar to compel the reading of the firman, and by the French to

Origin of the
Crimean war.

Quarrels be-
tween the Greek
and Latin
Churches in
Jerusalem.

secure that the key of the great door of the Holy Sepulchre should be given into the hands of the Latins, and that they should be allowed to replace a silver star on the shrine of the Nativity. But the instances of Lavalette had been urged with a violence of language and with threats of immediate warlike action which proved stronger than the more measured arguments of the Russian minister. An attempt to bring the question to some sort of settlement was made, and Alif Bey was despatched to Jerusalem ostensibly to read the firman. Instead of doing so, he gave to the Greeks a certain triumph over the Latins by declaring the permanence of the furniture of the altar, which was arranged to suit their ritual, and to the Latins a certain triumph by permitting them to perform mass there once a year. But the Greeks saw that the firman had not been read; the Latins were horrified at the idea of performing their service on a schismatical altar. This attempt having thus entirely failed, in December the Latins triumphed, the key was placed in their hands, and the star brought to its resting-place with great solemnity.

Insignificant and even trumpery though the quarrel appeared—the squabbings of two rival sets of monks—it had involved a diplomatic dispute, and the triumph was won by such ostentatious violence that the loser in the strife could not quietly put up with his defeat. In January 1853 the Russian Chancellor, Nesselrode, wrote a circular stating that the insult having been completed could not be recalled, but that reparation might be required; and that as France had acted by threats of violence, Russia would indeed take a less summary course, but would feel itself obliged to adopt precautionary measures to support its negotiations. Those measures were not once taken; a considerable army was collected on the frontiers of the Danubian Principalities, which were under the suzerainty of Turkey. But it is difficult to believe that so slight a cause could alone have produced the formidable action of Russia. To the Czar, as head of the Greek Church, and an enthusiastic, indeed bigoted, supporter of his religion, the question was no doubt of more importance than it seemed to be in the eyes of Western statesmen. But it appeared certain that something of far more consequence lay behind the question of the Holy Places. Some very remarkable conversations between the Czar and the English ambassador, Sir Hamilton Seymour, which took place at this time came to light in the course of the year, and disclosed what was working in the Czar's mind. The course of events in the preceding part of his reign had led him to believe that his true policy

Important
because
supported by
Russia and by
France.

The Czar's
views with
regard to
Turkey.

lay in maintaining the Ottoman Empire. At least he appeared to have arrived at the conclusion that it was impossible for him to take any strong measures against it. After his visit to London in 1844 he drew up and deposited in the English Foreign Office a memorandum of his views in which he distinctly stated that his present policy was the same as the English policy, that the maintenance of Turkey was necessary, that the best way of maintaining it was carefully to abstain from irritating diplomatic action threatening its independence, but that before all else it was desirable that Russia and England should, in case of the threatened dissolution of the Empire, come to an agreement as to the arrangement which was to take its place. It has lately transpired that the Czar had good reason for believing that such concerted action with England was possible. During his visit to London he had numerous conversations with the Ministers. The memorandum just quoted appears to sum up the conclusions there arrived at. But he had gone considerably further than mere consultation. A note had been drawn up and signed by Peel, Wellington, and Aberdeen, as well as by the Czar, implying a promise to support Russia in her claims to the Protectorate of the Holy Places and of the Greek religion, and this without consulting France. In the winter of 1852-53, in conversations resumed from time to time, and of a private and confidential nature, the Czar urged upon Sir Hamilton Seymour the necessity of bringing about such an arrangement as the memoranda contemplated, declaring, in figurative language, that the Turkish Government was a man sick unto death, and that it would be of the last inconvenience if he should die before measures were taken to facilitate the necessary arrangement with regard to his inheritance. The English Government replied that a secret arrangement would be disloyal to their other allies, that they were not in the habit of forming contingent treaties, and that nothing was more likely to bring about the result mentioned than discussions as to its probability. The Czar then suggested that it was not so much what should be done as what should not be done that he wished to decide. He would not, for instance, allow Constantinople to be held permanently by himself, nor would he allow it to be held by any other great nation, nor would he allow the formation of a Greek Empire, nor the establishment of independent Republics to form shelter for the Kossuths and Mazzinis of Europe. The reply from England was to the effect that the Government entirely agreed with him in rejecting all these schemes, but that their objection to anything like a formal agreement continued as strong as ever. At last the Czar went so far as to make

what can be considered as little else than the offer of a bribe to England; while the Principalities might remain as they were, virtually independent countries but under Russian protection, and Bulgaria might be established under the same form, there would be no objection, he said, to England appropriating Egypt and the Isle of Candia, and thus securing its intercourse with the East. These overtures met with the same rejection as the former ones, and for a while the Czar ceased to speak on the matter. But it is plain from what took place that he regarded the dissolution of the Turkish Empire as a very probable event. He indeed declared to the English that they were entirely misinformed if they believed that it had any principle of vitality left. The origin of his belief lay in the idea that the Christian populations, considerably outnumbering the Turkish subjects of the Porte, might at any moment rise and destroy the Government of which the administration was notoriously weak and deficient, and which from time to time acted towards its Christian subjects with a harshness which revolted the feelings of Europe. The opportunity for such an insurrection seemed not improbably to be at hand. A disturbance among the Christian inhabitants of Montenegro had induced the Porte to adopt very severe measures, and there seemed every chance of a repetition of those scenes of cruelty with which the suppression of Christian insurrections was apt to be attended. Austria, which was in some sort the protector of the Montenegrin Christians, had sent Prince Leinigen to Constantinople to demand a cessation of the Turkish interference in the country. The Czar believed that the suggestion would be refused, that the cruelties would take place, and that there was a fair opportunity for the Christian populations to rise. Of that opportunity he intended to take advantage. With unexpected wisdom the Turks accepted the intervention of Austria, and the Montenegrin question was settled.

But the Czar, whose mind was now set upon the certain dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, saw a fresh opportunity in the affair of the Holy Places. He therefore took up the case of the orthodox Greek Church more warmly than he had hitherto done, and resolved to send an extraordinary ambassador to Constantinople to press his negotiations for reparation, supported as they would now be by the presence of a large army on the frontier. Unfortunately for the peace of Europe, he selected for the purpose Prince Menschikoff, a man of overbearing character, and unused to the forms of diplomacy, a member of the extreme Russian party, and with a strong dislike to the English. His instructions were in obvious

Menschikoff
sent to
Constantinople.
March 2, 1853.

contradiction to the policy of the Czar in his memorandum; for they implied exactly that sort of irritating diplomacy which he had there deprecated. He was charged with two duties, the one the settlement of the question of the Holy Places, the second, far more important, to procure a convention between Turkey and Russia which should place the orthodox Christians, subjects of the Porte, under the immediate protectorate of Russia. The arrival of Prince Menschikoff had a very threatening appearance; he came surrounded by a military suite, and accompanied by the commander of the Black Sea fleet, and the chief of the staff of the land forces collected in Bessarabia. He came in fact in such a manner as to imply that he could at once put in motion both the military and naval forces of Russia in support of his demands. His arrival caused an immediate panic among the Turks. He refused to hold intercourse with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Fuad Effendi at once resigned, and the frightened Ministers sought the advice of Colonel Rose, at that time acting Minister for England, who thought the moment so critical that he despatched an order to the Admiral of the English fleet at Malta bidding him come up to the Dardanelles. Admiral Dundas declined to obey. But the mere knowledge that Colonel Rose had thus acted appears to have quieted the panic and restored the Turks to their equanimity. The English Government disavowed the action of its Minister, and as yet there was no sign of anything but friendship between the Courts of St. James and St. Petersburg. But the Emperor of the French, more deeply implicated in the question of the Holy Places, and more eager on account of the insecurity of his position at home to adopt a forward and prominent position abroad, was less prudent, and in the middle of March despatched the French fleet from Toulon to the Bay of Salamis. The measure gave great umbrage to the Russians, and Menschikoff, whose tone had been considerably lowered, at once grew more pressing, opening now more clearly the second object of his mission, and demanding the Convention insuring the Protectorate, while he offered in exchange that his master would place at the disposal of the Turks a fleet and 400,000 men to support them against any other European power. It must be observed that during the whole of this time the Czar was declaring his friendship for England, and that it is impossible to acquit him of double-dealing in requiring, as he did, that this Convention should be kept an absolute secret. That secrecy, however, the Turkish Minister had sense enough to refuse.

About this time the English Government awoke sufficiently to the

danger of the situation and to the fact that threats were being used to Turkey which might easily produce a European war. They thought it necessary to order Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to return to his post. He was ordered to proceed to Constantinople through Paris and Vienna, implying that he was to concert measures with France, already pledged to opposition to the Czar, and with Austria, by its position more interested in the maintenance of Turkey than any other European nation. He was given leave also to communicate orders to the Admiral at Malta to hold himself in readiness for immediate action. The reappearance of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe on the scene was full of significance. He was better acquainted than any other man in Europe with the affairs of the Turkish Empire, and his personal qualities had given him an unusual amount of influence over the Eastern mind. But he was also the avowed enemy of Russia, and personally distasteful to the Czar, who had even refused to receive him as ambassador in St. Petersburg. His presence at Constantinople seemed to imply that the English Government was determined, as of old, to maintain the independence of Turkey, and that it believed that the action of the Czar was threatening it. The diplomatic war at once began. One thing Lord Stratford saw clearly; the demands of Russia must be separated. The question of the Holy Places, on which the action of Russia was based, must at once be settled. The demand for the Protectorate would then appear in all its nakedness as an unjust and unwarrantable effort to coerce an independent nation, which in this case would be almost certain to enjoy the sympathy of Europe. Acting on this principle he set to work to bring the vexed question to a conclusion. Completely master of Menschikoff as a diplomatist, he persuaded him to separate the two demands, and succeeded in a few days in producing a compromise on the first point which was accepted by both sides. The dispute was finally closed upon the 22d of April, and the results embodied in a firman. With regard to the second point he encouraged the Turks to stand firm. Since the arrival of the French fleet at Salamis, Menschikoff, urged from St. Petersburg, had been eagerly and angrily at work. In the Convention offered to the Turkish acceptance the Protectorate was of course not openly avowed. It purported to be a treaty to secure under the guarantee of Russia all the immunities, spiritual and temporal (and in the arrangements of the Turkish Empire these were closely connected), which the orthodox Church had ever enjoyed. It was seen that the effect of this would be to deprive the Sultan of the power, without

Lord Stratford
de Redcliffe
sent to
Constantinople.
April.

breach of treaty, of altering any of the arrangements he had made with regard to the majority of his subjects. Some weeks of angry discussion followed. Several times Menschikoff demanded an answer within a short limited period. The Turks invariably replied with extreme civility but perfect firmness. At last the Russian envoy declared his mission at an end. Before he actually departed, however, Lord Stratford took the wise step of assembling the ambassadors of the other Great Powers, and thus treating the matter as one of general interest. They all agreed entirely with his view. But even their protest did not shake Menschikoff, who at length on the 20th of May, only altering the form of his proposition, and demanding a diplomatic note instead of a convention, sent in an ultimatum with the same inherent fault as his preceding demand. The ultimatum was rejected, and Menschikoff with the whole of the Russian embassy withdrew; but not till after the Sultan had yielded so far as to issue on his own authority a guarantee of the exercise of all their spiritual rights to the Greek Church. It was the 21st of May when the ultimatum was refused.

Enraged at the failure of his embassy, on the 31st of May the Czar instructed Count Nesselrode to inform the Porte that having failed in obtaining the guarantee he desired for the orthodox Christians, he should at once proceed to occupy the Danubian Principalities and hold them as a material guarantee, but that he would abstain at present from offensive operations against Turkey itself. The threat was carried out in the first days of July. The Pruth was then crossed and the Principalities occupied. On the same day that the vanguard crossed the river a conference of the representatives of the great Powers assembled at Vienna. The idea of treating the matter as one of general interest had been adopted. As early as the 17th of June, Austria had declared its full union with England; Prussia, too, had declared its intention to unite cordially with the other Powers. The position of Austria upon the flank of any Russian army moving towards the Principalities, seemed to render an advance of the Russians in that direction a matter of extreme danger. The interests of Austria were also deeply involved in restraining the growth of Russian influence. It was almost impossible, if the four Powers had acted firmly in union, that the occupation of the Principalities could have long continued. But unfortunately the English Government had entered upon a second line of policy not wholly consistent

Menschikoff
withdraws
defeated.
May 21.

Russia occupies
the Principa-
lities.
July 2.

Conference at
Vienna.

with this perfect union. In fact, the English Cabinet was not at one in its views. Lord Aberdeen was not only constitutionally averse to war, but had a high personal respect for the Czar, and was hampered by the secret arrangement to which he had been a party. He was determined to pursue the path of negotiations as long as it should be at all possible. He always spoke as if war was an impossibility, and would have been satisfied with the removal of the Russian troops from the Principalities. Lord Palmerston, on the other hand, had a deep mistrust of Russia, and believed that it was following its usual course, speaking words of peace and friendship while bringing about by violence events telling entirely in its own favour—events which if successful it would adopt as accomplished facts from which it could not withdraw, while if unsuccessful it could fall back upon its pacific diplomatic language. He therefore desired something considerably beyond the evacuation of the Principalities. A concert of the four Powers, if honestly maintained, would in all probability have produced the result desired by Aberdeen. But the constant pressure exerted by Palmerston, backed up by the French Emperor, drove the Government, in the first place, into a close combination with France, scarcely consistent with united action in concert with the four Powers, and secondly, induced England to adopt measures of a hostile character which could not fail to precipitate the war. Lord Aberdeen's attitude produced the further result of exciting in the mind of the Czar a fixed belief that England would not proceed to the last extremities. How far Russia was to be trusted must remain a matter of opinion, but it can scarcely be questioned that, even for the success of the diplomatic settlement, less appearance of a determination to avoid war, less use of pacific language would have been desirable. The twofold policy of the English Cabinet might have been discovered in the language of the Queen's Speech at the close of the session (August 20th). In one and the same sentence she declared herself closely united with France, and as acting in concert with the other Powers of Europe. It appeared however at the time as though the two lines of policy, in fact very different, were but one. While the war party marked its ascendancy by hastily despatching, on the 2nd of July, the allied fleets to Besika Bay, the conference at Vienna continued its work, and produced on the 31st of July what is known as the "Vienna Note," embodying propositions for an arrangement which it was hoped both Russia and Turkey would accept. The Vienna Note promised for an instant to be successful.

Different views
of Aberdeen
and Palmerston.

The Vienna
Note.
July 31.

Its purport had been communicated to the Russian Court, which had expressed its readiness to accept it. But when it was sent to the Porte, the Ministers of the Sultan found in it certain things which appeared to them to leave the door open for that same future interference with their independence which they were engaged in combating. They introduced alterations on August 19th, and the Note, as altered, was forwarded to Russia, but rejected by that Court, and rejected with explanations which clearly showed that the Turks had not been wrong in their view of the interpretation which the document might bear.

From the time of the rejection of the Vienna Note, although negotiation continued, the approach of war became more certain and rapid. The movement of the fleets had given extreme umbrage to the Czar, and had called forth a circular from Count Nesselrode, alleging that the occupation of the Principalities was the consequence. The fallacy of the assertion was exposed in firm letters by both Lord Clarendon and the French Foreign Minister. The determination to occupy the Principalities had been intimated in the end of May before the fleets were moved. But argument had no effect in allaying the anger of the Czar, while his pretension to restrict the movements of the English fleet, while strictly within its rights and infringing no treaties, exasperated the minds of the English people. Both in Russia and Turkey the people had become excited by the long dispute, and had begun to regard the approaching crisis as a question of religion. In September the Mahomedan theological students of Constantinople burst out in warlike riots. There seemed some possibility of a massacre of Christians, and although Lord Stratford thought no such danger imminent, the French ambassador, de la Cour, wrote home in terror to his Court. An opportunity was thus afforded for a further step in the policy of Napoleon and of the war party in England, and ostensibly for the purpose of preserving the Christians, the fleets were ordered up to Constantinople. As there was no actual declaration of war, although it was difficult to avoid regarding the occupation of the Principalities as a warlike act, the passage of the Dardanelles was a technical breach of the treaty of 1841. A few days later it would have been strictly in accordance with the treaty, for on the 23d of October, feeling stronger doubtless for the presence of the English and French fleets, and conscious that longer waiting would be of no advantage to it, the Porte formally declared war with Russia. The declaration of war was met by a strange reply from the Czar, who,

The English
and French
fleets enter the
Dardanelles.
Oct. 22.

on the 31st October, issued a circular to his representatives at foreign courts, asserting that he would abstain from taking the offensive, and content himself with holding the Principalities as a material guarantee. He thus set the Danube as a limit between himself and the Turks which he declined to cross, while at the same time he in no way precluded the Turks from acting on the offensive. Omar Pasha, the commander of the Turkish troops, took advantage of this state of things, passed the river, and the war began on various points of its course. The representatives of the European Powers at Constantinople urged upon the Porte the wisdom of refraining from such action. But before long an event occurred which destroyed all hope of peace.

Turkish fleet destroyed at Sinope. Nov. 30. A Turkish squadron of seven frigates, employed in carrying reinforcements to the troops in Asia, was lying in the harbour of Sinope, when it was attacked by a far superior force under Admiral Nachimoff, and entirely destroyed. The disaster, from which one steamer alone escaped, was attended, it was said, with the loss of 4000 men. The declaration of the Czar that he would not take the offensive caused this attack to be regarded as an act of barbarous treachery. There was in fact no surprise, for the Russian fleet had been many days at sea capturing Turkish vessels, and the admiral of the Ottoman squadron had indicated his extreme danger to the Ministers at Constantinople. But carried out under the very eyes as it were of the allied fleets, in a Turkish port, and after the declaration of the Czar, it raised a storm of indignation too strong to be resisted. The allied fleets were forthwith ordered to enter the

The allied fleets enter the Black Sea. Jan. 4, 1854. Black Sea, and to compel every Russian ship to withdraw into harbour. Thus alone did it seem that the defensive duty of the Allies could be properly performed. The order was not given without much hesitation on the part of the English Cabinet; so much so that it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Lord Palmerston's resignation on the 16th of December was connected with this question. The cause he alleged was his disapproval of the outlines of a Reform Bill laid before the Cabinet by Lord John Russell; and it is true that the refusal of Lord Aberdeen to allow weight to his objections on this point affords sufficient grounds to explain his conduct. Yet there was undoubtedly a strong divergence of opinion in the Cabinet with regard to the conduct of Turkish affairs, and Palmerston's return to office was not secured till Aberdeen, yielding to the urgent demands of France and the firmness of Lord Clarendon, had consented to the occupation of the Black Sea (Dec. 27).

This difficulty had throughout the Session excited frequent discussions in Parliament, and filled the minds of Ministers with alarm during the recess. In the words of Lord Clarendon, "England, with a Government bent on peace, had been drifting into war." For the measure which secured harmony in the Cabinet rendered war inevitable. The Czar almost immediately withdrew his representatives from Paris and London, and prepared to invade Turkey, for the preservation of which England and France were pledged. So clear did it seem that the employment of English troops would be necessary—at all events in defence of the Sultan's territory—that Engineer officers were sent to report upon the best means of assisting the Sultan, and troops were collected at Malta. But with strange persistency, Lord Aberdeen continued to speak peace; and the French Emperor, desirous before all things of playing a prominent part, wrote (Feb. 9) an autograph letter to the Czar, in the name of himself and the Queen, hoping thereby to identify himself with England, and to appear as the peacemaker of Europe. The Czar, still perhaps trusting to English inactivity, peremptorily refused the overture. But the temper of the English people was now thoroughly roused, and Palmerston's views were in accordance with the general feeling. The unexpected success of the Turks upon the Danube excited strong sympathy; and when Austria, which consistently aimed at ousting the Russians from the Principalities, on the 22d of February indicated to England that if England and France would summon Russia to evacuate the Principalities by a given day, and on her failure to do this, would declare war, the Cabinet of Austria would support the summons, England, urged by its own warlike feeling and Napoleon, smarting at the rejection of his letter, imprudently accepted the suggestion. A little waiting must have driven Austria to take her part in the armed intervention, and the summons would have been irresistible. But it was sent off in the name of England and France only, demanding the withdrawal of the Russian troops by the 30th of April. The principle was indeed supported by the Austrian and Prussian Courts, but its separate form practically put an end to concerted action, and left the war exclusively to England and France. The summons was refused on the 19th of March, and on the 27th war was formally declared both by France and England. The joint declaration was immediately followed by a treaty with the Sultan and with France. The contracting parties declared that they would not act separately, that they would seek no separate advantage, that they would receive into their alliance any of the other Powers of

Declaration of war.
March 27.

Europe, and that their object was to arrive at a peace which should secure Europe from a repetition of the present troubles.

The approach of war gave more than usual importance to the proposed financial arrangements of the year. And on the 6th of March, while the country was still nominally at peace, Mr. Gladstone brought forward the Budget. He was able to show with regard to the preceding year that there had been in both the expenditure and receipts results more favourable than those he had expected. The actual surplus would on the 6th of April be £2,854,000. After remission of nearly a million and a half of duty there appeared to be an increase on the receipt of customs amounting to £200,000. Of all the changes, that on the stamp duties had been most successful. Instead of a large estimated diminution, the six months showed upon that item alone an increase of £36,000. For the coming year the case was of course less satisfactory. While the income might be put at £53,349,000 it was impossible to estimate the expenditure at less than £56,189,000. There would be a deficiency of £2,840,000. The question before the House was how was this deficiency to be met, and Mr. Gladstone explained that, in the opinion of Government, it was not right to listen to the old plausible argument that the expense of the present should be thrown upon posterity by means of loans, but that, if possible, the burden of the war should be supported by the revenue of the year. Quoting his prophetic words of the preceding year as to the value of the income-tax, he now proposed that the deficiency should be covered by doubling that tax for half a year. This would give the sum required with a small margin over. The declaration of war necessitated a revised budget, but the principles adopted were nearly the same. While bringing in the earlier form of it the Chancellor of

Mr. Gladstone's
Budget.
March 1854.

the Exchequer had declared that it might be necessary to have recourse again to renewed indirect taxes, and when the heavier demands of actual war arose—after showing the amount of money required, and explaining that £6,850,000 would be wanted—he proposed that the income-tax should be doubled for the whole year during the continuance of hostilities, but that to avoid exhausting the power of that great resource additional taxes should be laid upon some articles of general consumption, but not of prime necessity. The impost on spirits both in Scotland and Ireland was raised, the sugar duties were rearranged so as to produce larger results; and finally, as all classes should be called upon to contribute to the national needs, the malt-tax was to be increased from 2s. 9d.

to 4s. From these sources he believed that a sufficient revenue would arise. The Budget called forth much discussion. Mr. Gladstone's plan of conversion in the preceding year had proved abortive. His manipulation of Exchequer Bills seemed to be open to question. The increase of the malt-tax was regarded by all who had any remnant of Protectionist feeling about them as a fresh assault upon the landed interest. And although the great principle of meeting the year's expenses by the year's revenue seemed generally approved, there were many who clung to the old system of raising loans, and found, in the strictures which the Chancellor of the Exchequer passed upon the finance of so well-established an authority as Mr. Pitt, an easy means of assaulting him. There was however a largeness and justice in his financial conceptions, and a frankness in the readiness with which he confessed the failure of his efforts of the preceding year which proved too strong for his opponents, and his budget passed with large majorities. As was natural, the discussion had been attended with much angry allusion to the management of the negotiations and of the war, and Mr. Disraeli undoubtedly touched a weak point when he criticised, with his usual sharpness, the uncertain action of the Cabinet, and declared the present condition of England the consequence of its divided policy.

The interest excited by the war was naturally too absorbing to allow room for much domestic legislation. The Reform Bill, which had been for some time promised, was indeed produced, but there appeared so little interest in the question that, after some discussion, Lord John Russell thought it wise to withdraw it. One Bill however of much interest and importance, for securing the Reform of the Universities, on which for some time a Commission had been sitting, was brought in and passed. Mr. Heywood, a Unitarian, educated at Cambridge, had given much time and attention to the constitution of his University. Among the numerous deficiencies which he had found, the one which he selected to raise into prominence was the exclusion of Dissenters from the degree at Cambridge, and even from admission to the University at all at Oxford. In 1850 he moved "a humble address for a commission of inquiry into the state of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, with a view to assist in the adaptation of these important institutions to the requirements of modern times." The motion excited the strongest opposition among those devoted to the Church and to the preservation, even in their errors, of the Universities in which they had been themselves educated. But Lord John

University
Reform Bill.
July 1854.

Russell, speaking for the Government, prevented discussion by at once promising that if the motion was withdrawn a royal commission of inquiry should be issued. It brought in its report in 1852. It had encountered considerable difficulty in obtaining evidence which it had no right to compel, but quite enough had been collected to show the wide room existing for reform. Lord Derby's Government, then in power, had taken no steps with regard to it. But Lord John Russell now produced a comprehensive Bill based upon the Report. Apart from the details of the scheme, two questions were involved; the right of interference with corporate property or the special wills of Founders, and the extension of the benefits of the University to Dissenters. The answer to both was found in the national character of the Universities, and the right of the nation, for its own benefit, to accommodate the disposition of national property to the requirements of the time. The general feeling of Parliament was strong enough to overcome the opposition which the Bill encountered on both points, although its stringency was a good deal relaxed and its character became rather permissive than authoritative. A commission was appointed to work with the Colleges and make a new body of Statutes for each. Considerable freedom and variety was thus allowed to the various corporations. But the Bill laid down certain lines of reform which were to be followed. The restriction of Fellowships to founder's kin, or to counties, which allowed men of very second-rate ability to enjoy College emoluments, was to be withdrawn, and Fellowships thrown open to free competition. The same principle was applied, but with much less completeness, in the case of schools holding Exhibition Scholarships or Fellowships at the Universities. A considerable portion of the College revenues, in the case of the richer Colleges, was to be devoted to University purposes, in the hope of strengthening the professorial teaching. It was however in the constitution of the University that Parliament could most properly interfere. The government of Oxford had been exclusively in the hands of the Heads of Houses, to the entire exclusion of the younger and more active part of the University. Henceforward a Council, consisting, in equal numbers, of Heads of Houses, Professors, and Masters of Arts, chosen by the Congregation (or body of resident masters) was to supply their place. To them was intrusted the initiation of legislation, their measures being subsequently laid before the Congregation, and finally before the Convocation (or whole body of Masters of Arts of the University), and requiring the assent of those bodies before they became law. Upon the other, and perhaps more

important point, the admission of Dissenters, the Bill was at first silent. But clauses, on the motion of Mr. Heywood, were added which freed from all subscription to the formulæ of the Church young men both at their matriculation and upon taking their first degree. The Commission constituted by this Bill carried out its work in the succeeding year, and set on foot that course of University reform which has been subsequently considerably enlarged.

A campaign had already been fought when the English and French declarations of war were issued. Omar Pasha had already proved the capacity of the Turkish troops to oppose, even single-handed, very serious obstacles to any Russian advance. Free himself to act on the offensive, while his opponent had

*The campaign
on the Danube.
Jan.-April
1854.*

tied his own hands by his declarations to avoid any assault upon the Turkish home provinces, he had passed the Danube, and, taking up his position at Kalafat, had succeeded in repelling the Russian assaults upon his line there, while at Schumla, on the right bank, a strongly entrenched camp formed a basis for defensive operations should he be compelled to withdraw. At the same time the Turkish troops had been exercised, and had learned their strength in contests along the course of the river, in which on the whole they had maintained their superiority. The movements of the Turks had drawn the bulk of the Russian army to the extreme west of the line of the Danube. Naturally irritated by his want of success, and by the vigorous hostility of his opponents, in the spring of the year 1854 the Czar determined to pass the limit he had set to himself, and to invade Turkey. Paskiewitz, his ablest general, advised him that the line of advance through Silistria, thence to Schumla, and so over the Balkans to Adrianople, was the most desirable. But aware that the invasion would encounter the opposition of the Western Powers as well as of the Turks, and that the English and French troops were already arriving on the scene of action, he seems to have warned the Czar that for any hope of success Silistria must fall before the 1st of May. The siege was not, however, even undertaken till the 19th of that month.

Meanwhile the practical certainty of war had induced the Western Powers to send troops to the east. On the 22d of February the Guards had sailed from London, and it was the intention that the troops collected at Malta should be despatched with all speed to Constantinople. The French troops were placed under the command of Marshal St. Arnaud, a man who had distinguished himself as a dashing soldier of unscrupulous character in the Algerian war, but whose chief

*Departure of
English and
French troops
under Raglan
and St. Arnaud.
March 1854.*

claim to the post he was called to occupy was the large part he had played as Minister of War at the time of the *coup d'état*. His capacity for commanding large armies had not been proved, and he was suffering from severe illness. The English Government had selected Lord Raglan to command the army. As Lord Fitzroy Somerset he had long been the constant friend of the Duke of Wellington, and his experience as military secretary seemed to mark him out as the most suitable person to be found. But it was not his military capacity alone which was held to fit him specially for the charge intrusted to him. His excellent judgment, conciliatory but commanding manner, and power of working in harmony with other men, were regarded as peculiarly valuable in the very delicate position he would have to occupy as the joint-commander of the troops of two somewhat jealous nations. Politically there can be little question that his appointment was the best that could be made; few men could have so successfully encountered the difficulties which the divided command created.

The first measures of the English contemplated purely defensive warfare. Lines were drawn round Gallipoli to form a base on which to retreat should the Russians pour across the Balkans and approach the capital. But the events upon the Danube appeared to show conclusively that there was no danger of such a rapid success attending the Russian arms. It was therefore decided—not without some opposition from the French—that, upon the request of Omar Pasha, the allied troops should be moved to close proximity to the scene of action, and while the siege of Silistria was still in progress, they were collected in the neighbourhood of Varna. The siege of Silistria had afforded a fresh proof of the power of the Turks to carry on their resistance even single-handed. For thirty-nine days the weakly fortified town had been maintained against all the assaults of a considerable Russian army.

The successful defence was mainly attributable to the resource and gallantry of two young English officers, Captain Butler and Lieutenant Nasmyth, who, acting only as volunteers, speedily made themselves practically the leaders of the defence, devoting their attention principally to the preservation of a small outlying fortification called Arab Tabia, which lay in the way of the Russian approaches. The withdrawal from the siege of the Russians, which took place upon the 23d of June, followed by the passage of the river vainly opposed by the whole Russian army at Giurgevo on the 7th of July, convinced the Russian generals that, for the present year

Siege of
Silistria raised.
June 23.

at least, invasion was an impossibility, supported as the Turks would henceforth be by the troops of France and England. Moreover the inherent weakness, in a military point of view, of the occupation of Wallachia had made itself evident; for the Austrians, whose summons to Russia to evacuate the Danubian Principalities had been unheeded, contracted, on the 14th of June, a convention with the Turks, acknowledging the necessity of the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire, and pledging the Austrian Government to exhaust all means of negotiation, "and other means," to obtain the evacuation of the Principalities. The other means implied an army of occupation, which was at once prepared; and as it would fall directly upon the flank of the advancing Russians, and threaten their communications, it rendered any prosecution of an invasion almost an impossibility. By the end of July Bucharest had passed again into the hands of the Turks, and the Russian troops were on all sides withdrawing.

In fact the immediate object of the war had been already obtained. A fleet under Sir Charles Napier, sent out early in the spring with a show of somewhat extravagant complacency and enthusiasm, had driven the Russian fleet in the Baltic into shelter. The allied fleets had swept the Euxine clear. Advance across the Danube had been proved impossible. Austria had actively joined in enforcing the will of Europe upon the Czar. There was no point in which war could be carried on, except in the extreme east, and the Russian hold upon the material guarantee of the Principalities had been withdrawn. As war dissolves treaties, the opportunity now lay open to the Turks, freed from all previous complications and speaking with the voice of Europe, to set their relations with their threatening enemies upon a clear and well-defined footing.

Unfortunately the war temper both in England and France was roused, and a large number of men, regarding with profound distrust the constant advances during late years of the Russian power, were unwilling to allow the opportunity of striking some decisive blow against its progress to pass away unused. This feeling found abundant expression in the public press. The siege of Silistria had not been raised, and the troops of the allies were still collecting at Varna, when, on the 15th of June, Lord Palmerston, in a memorandum to the Cabinet, stated his conviction that the most effective method of bringing the Russians to reason was to destroy Sebastopol, and with it their Black Sea fleet, which constituted their real and permanent threat against Turkey. With singular clearness he pointed out the impossibility of the Russian advance, its

Objects of the
war attained.
July.

Reasons why
the war con-
tinued.

growing weakness as it moved from its communications, and urged that the allied generals should be employed in the full flush of their first energy in the Crimea. There can be little doubt that had this course then been taken, immediate success would have been the result. Sebastopol was as yet hardly fortified. The Russian troops in the Crimea did not probably exceed 40,000. The occupation of the Russian army upon the Danube would have precluded the possibility of large reinforcements. But in this memorandum he appears to have been only enforcing a suggestion made some months earlier by the French Emperor, which had been rejected upon grounds which Lord Palmerston himself explained. Unused to war, trammelled by a faulty system of administration, it was with great difficulty that England could bring her army into active use. There were deficiencies in all the subsidiary branches of the service. And a persistent belief, the offspring of the strong desire on the part of the Ministry, that war would be unnecessary, had prevented early energetic measures. The allied troops were also in some sort pledged to assist Omar Pasha, at least by their presence, in securing his position in Silistria.

But a step which, if possible, would have been both legitimate and advantageous in June, bore a different aspect in August. Circumstances had produced the result desired without the adoption of the vigorous means suggested by the Emperor and Lord Palmerston. The proposal had, however, approved itself to at least one member of the Cabinet; and when the question arose as to the further prosecution of the war, the Duke of Newcastle pressed strongly for its adoption; and almost immediately upon the receipt of the news of the relief of Silistria, with the consent of the whole Cabinet, he wrote a despatch to Lord Raglan ordering an immediate expedition to the Crimea, so worded as to leave the general little voice in the matter. The English commander received the letter on the 16th of July, and believed that he had no alternative but to obey. As orders of a corresponding nature had reached the French commander, Lord Raglan—although not without considerable opposition from St. Arnaud and some of the English generals—contrived to get the plans of the Home Governments accepted, and preparations were at once carried out with energy.

Difficulties of the undertaking.

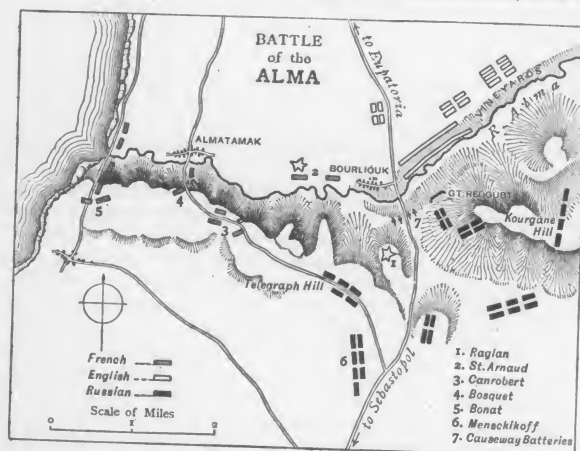
It appears probable that Lord Raglan was induced to insist upon the invasion of the Crimea rather by the belief that no choice in the matter was left him, and by a sense of soldierly obedience, than by his approbation of the

scheme. For the operation was scarcely one to commend itself to a man trained in a strict military school. It partook largely of the nature of an expedition rather than of a campaign. The generals possessed little or no information as to the strength of the place they were called upon to assault, or the amount of opposition likely to be offered by the enemy's troops. And although the sea, entirely at their command, afforded some sort of base for their operations, it did not enter into the calculation of those who ordered the undertaking to establish a regular well-furnished base and proceed to a methodical conquest leading to an important siege. It was rather their intention while using their power upon the sea as a means of safety, to allow the expeditionary force to act chiefly as a movable column with the special duty of capturing Sebastopol by a *coup de main*. There certainly existed the belief that before the winter the city would have fallen. For the success of such a movement it was first of all necessary that means should be found to convey across the Black Sea, rapidly and at once, the whole of the expedition, and secondly, that the army should have at its command a large amount of land transport service for the carriage of the supplies which must accompany it. Neither of these necessities were for the instant in possession of either the English or the French; while a further difficulty in the way of such an operation was to be found in the divided command, at a time when extreme rapidity and unity of action would be most desirable. The energy of Lord Lyons and Sir George Brown supplied the first deficiency, and the English general found that he had the means of moving the whole of his army and apparatus at one trip by steam power to the enemy's coast; and by degrees sufficient land transport was also procured. But time was necessary for supplying these wants; the intention of the Western Powers was well known by the Russians, and the opportunity afforded of improving the strength of Sebastopol and of collecting troops was not neglected.

It was not until the 7th of September that the great armada set forth. On the 14th the disembarkation of the troops began, near an old fort in the Bay of Eupatoria, and was carried out without molestation either on land or sea. Prince Menshikoff, in command of the Russian army and fleet, had decided to make his stand upon the banks of the Alma—a little river crossing the southward line of march about fifteen miles to the north of Sebastopol. There, on the 20th, the allied armies found him stationed in a strong position with some 45,000 men and powerful artillery, but without any very complete precautions in the way of

The allied armies land in the Crimea.

entrenchments. To the French had been given the right of the line of march, the more advantageous position, as being near the coast their right was covered by the shipping, while the English, covering the French left, were exposed to the constant chances of attack. The Alma is a small stream, easily fordable in most places. Its northern bank slopes gently down amid enclosures and vineyards. But on the south, near the sea, the land immediately beyond the stream rises at first almost in a cliff, which passes as it proceeds inland into a steep high hill, up which however there are roads, and then gradually falls away, till it takes the form of a sharp, almost perpendicular, bank of



from ten to fifteen feet in height, leaving a narrow level shelf between its foot and the edge of the stream. On the top of these banks the country is of a down-like character, rising gradually, with knolls and hollows, towards the west, where is the Kourgané hill, on which Menschikoff had taken up his position. Between that and the sea there is a second marked height on which was an unfinished telegraph. Between these two hills ran the road to Sebastopol. The whole position from the sea-coast to the Kourgané hill was about five miles in length; but the Russian commander, straitened for want of troops, and believing that the highlands near the sea were practically inaccessible, had left them

undefended, and had collected nearly the whole of his army either across the road, which was strongly defended with guns, or on the Kourgané hill, on the face of which he had erected a redoubt. The English, on the left, had thus the greater part of the enemy in their front, and ground less difficult indeed to ascend, but more open, and therefore more dangerous, than that in front of the French.

The allied armies numbered between 50,000 and 60,000, the English contingent, which alone had cavalry, was a little short of 25,000. Marshal St. Arnaud suggested that the French, who had found a practicable way across the mouth of the river, should turn the Russian left, while the English should attempt a similar movement upon the enemy's right. But Lord Raglan, feeling sure that the French were not sufficiently strong both to turn the left and occupy the centre of the line, and knowing that a body of 3000 cavalry, with good ground for acting, lay upon the right, determined that he would make the assault in front. The French attempted their turning movement, but without any very great success, for the roads which allowed the advance of the infantry proved in some cases unfit for artillery, which had therefore to be sent round by a longer route. Thus the infantry, having gained the crest of the hill, was unable to move further for want of its artillery. At the same time, by some mismanagement, the road in front of their left division became blocked with troops, and the forces which should have supported the infantry on the plateau were unable to be of service. Lord Raglan, originally intended to await the turning movement of the French, but observing the obstacles in its way, ordered a direct advance. The Light Division, which was in the first line, pushed forward through the vineyards. The general who commanded it had neglected to cover it with skirmishers, and it was therefore open during its advance to the fire of the enemy. Its formation was broken by its passage through the vineyards, and when it reached the shelf at the bottom of the bank it was not much more than a disorderly crowd of men. It was impossible to re-arrange the line, but disordered as it was, it was led forward up the slope of the hill, and succeeded in capturing the great redoubt. The second line, consisting of the Guards and Scotch regiments, should have been ready to support it; it was however not sufficiently close. Unsupported and in disorder the Light Division was unable to maintain its advanced position; it was pushed back from the redoubt and broken. As it retired down the hill it met the advancing line of the Guards, and involved one of its three battalions in its ruin. Meanwhile General Evans, who was

Battle of
the Alma.
Sep. 20.

advancing along the main road, found his advance checked by the batteries which had been disposed across it. The battle did not seem to be going favourably to the allies. What was little more than an accident changed the fate of the day. Lord Raglan, with his staff, riding forward beyond the line, had found himself upon a knoll in the midst of the enemy's position, looking down upon the Russian reserves and upon the flank of the batteries holding the main road. His mere appearance there is believed to have checked the movements of the Russians. The staff which surrounded him was thought to be a portion of the French army advancing from a successful turning movement. More efficacious still was his immediate order to bring up two guns. They were speedily in position, and their fire compelled the withdrawal of the reserves, and so enfiladed the batteries on the road that they also were quickly compelled to retire, clearing the way for Evans's advance. The Russian troops, opposing the Light Division and the Guards, were thus threatened upon their left flank, and unable to make the necessary effort to drive back their assailants. In spite therefore of the gap caused by the disaster of the Fusiliers, the line of the Guards pushed successfully onwards. Sir Colin Campbell, at the head of the Highlanders, advanced rapidly upon their left hand: the heavy columns opposed to them were one after the other broken and forced to retire; the hill was won, and the enemy in retreat in all directions. A large column of eight battalions had been gathered upon the Russian left to oppose the French. It even appears by its presence to have held the French troops upon the ridge entirely in check. But the artillery at length arrived from the sea-coast, and firing upon the flank of the column obliged it to withdraw. The French, now fully equipped, pushed vigorously onward, and without encountering much opposition took possession of the Telegraph Hill. As long as the allies were in sight the defeated Russians withdrew with some show of order, covered by the unbroken column which had withdrawn before the French, and by the cavalry which had not been engaged. But when the enemy was no longer to be seen the retreat became a disorderly rout. The loss of the English in killed and wounded was more than 2000, that of the French about 500. The only trophies won were two guns captured in the taking of the redoubt. Yet the victory was very complete, and the English commander wished at once to follow it up and press upon his beaten foe. But St. Arnaud, in the last stage of illness, put obstacles in the way, and for the sake of harmony Lord Raglan thought it necessary to yield. The army rested therefore on the ground which it had won.

The object for which the battle had been fought was the capture of Sebastopol. A long inlet running east and west forms the harbour of Sebastopol. The town, which was little more than a great military and naval establishment, was upon the south side of this inlet. Works of a very formidable character guarded the entrance of the harbour, and upon the northern heights opposite to the city was a fortification known as the Star fort. On the southern side the coast is deeply indented with various creeks, which are continued in ravines running up to a high plateau, of a somewhat triangular form, occupying the southern corner of the Crimea. At the head of the harbour the river Tchernaya, flowing from the south-east, divides this plateau from the high and forest-covered country lying round the eastern end of the harbour. At the time the battle was fought the southern side was but weakly defended towards the land. The site of the town is cut nearly in half by one of the deep ravines, separating the town proper, lying seaward, from a suburb. This separating creek is called the Man-of-war Harbour. Between the head of this creek and the sea the defences covering the town itself were in tolerable order, and all connected. But around the suburb there was no complete defence, and the separate fortifications were by no means formidable.

Towards this prize the expedition of the allies now advanced, attended by the fleet. Four days after the battle the allies reached the Belbek, so close to the city that it became a matter of necessity to decide upon their next step. It appears to have been the wish of the English at once to take advantage of their victory and assault the north side. It is now known that such a step would almost certainly have been successful, and that the possession of that side of the harbour would have necessitated the speedy surrender of the town. But again St. Arnaud offered objections. There was, he declared, an earthwork in the way, the capture of which would be a matter of great difficulty. Sir Edmund Lyons, who was eagerly pressing for the assault, reconnoitred the position, and found that the earthwork was indeed there, but that it was unarmed. When he returned with the information, he found that he was too late, and that a new course had been decided on by the generals. They had come to the determination to undertake a flank march round the head of the harbour, and to take possession of the heights on the south. It was a difficult operation, for the country was unknown and rough, and while in the act of marching the armies were open to any assault upon their left flank. It was however

Position of Sebastopol.

The armies march round Sebastopol to Balaclava.

carried out unmolested. The English led the way, and as they moved round the harbour came in contact at Mackenzie's farm, in a thick wood, with the extreme rear of the Russian army marching towards the mainland of Russia up the great road which joins Sebastopol with Baktchi Serai. The slight skirmish which ensued produced no results, and on the 26th the English arrived at the little landlocked harbour of Balaclava, at the foot of the steep hills forming the eastern edge of the plateau. The fleet, duly warned of the operation, had already arrived. When the French came up, Canrobert, who had now succeeded the dying St. Arnaud, demanded the harbour of Balaclava, which, as the march had entirely altered the relative positions of the armies, should naturally have fallen to the French as forming the right wing; for, the armies now looking northward, the right wing had become the easternmost of the two. The English were unwilling to surrender the harbour, and a compromise was arrived at, by which the harbour was left in their hands, but they at the same time undertook to continue to hold the more dangerous and exposed side of the line. The French lost nothing by yielding, as far more roomy and commodious harbours at Kasatch Bay were found in the ground which they now occupied. A similar question to that which had arisen on the 24th now again rose. Should Sebastopol be attacked at once or not? Again it would appear that Lord Raglan, Sir Edmund Lyons, and others, were desirous of immediate assault. Again the French, more instructed in the technical rules of war, and supported by the opinion of Sir John Burgoyne, who commanded the English Engineers, declined the more vigorous suggestion, and it was determined at least to wait till the siege guns from the fleet were landed, and the artillery fire of the enemy weakened, in preparation for the assault.

If the light of subsequent knowledge, and perhaps even with the knowledge then obtainable if rightly used, it appears that in all the three instances mentioned the bolder less regular course would have been the true wisdom. For Menschikoff had adopted a somewhat strange measure of defence. He had given up all hopes of using his fleet to advantage. He had caused some of his vessels to be sunk at the entrance of the harbour, which was thus closed; and having drawn the crews, some 18,000 in number, from the ships, he had intrusted to them the defence of the town, and had marched away with his whole army. The garrison did not now number more than 25,000, and they were quite unfit—being sailors—for operations in the field. The defences were not those of a regular for-

The Russian
plan of defence.

ress, but rather of an entrenched position. It would have been impossible for such a garrison to have held out against a well-organised assault from a victorious army of 50,000 men. So strong was the Russian belief in the immediate fall of the town that the false news of the fall of Sebastopol, which for a day or two delighted the people of England, and was so fully credited that the French Emperor announced it to his troops, probably arose from it. For many hours the public was filled with enthusiastic joy at the tidings that the Russian fleet was sunk and Sebastopol captured. It was indeed what ought to have happened. Yet, though Menschikoff's conduct might have produced this result, and has been accordingly blamed, it did in fact produce results of an exactly opposite character, which must be allowed to justify it. There were in Sebastopol two men who, working together, made an extraordinary use of their opportunities. Korniloff, the Admiral, forcing himself to the front by sheer nobleness of character and enthusiasm, found in Colonel von Todleben, at that time on a voluntary mission in the town, an assistant of more than common genius. Inspired by their leader, and directed by the skill of his coadjutor, the garrison and townsmen of Sebastopol made good use of the vast resources supplied by the military establishments and dismantled fleet. Time was all that was wanted, and that was gained by the dread felt by men of military knowledge lest Menschikoff's army should fall upon the allies in the midst of their assault upon the town. Thus, while the destruction of the fleet closed the harbour and secured the town from assault from the sea, liberated for garrison work nearly 20,000 men, and supplied vast material and overwhelming artillery, the mere fact of the presence of the army, badly employed though it was, outside the walls checked any immediate assault, and gave time to the garrison to develop their resources. Whether he acted by intention, or whether the result was merely accidental, Menschikoff could, as it proved, have made no wiser move.

The decision of the allies to await the landing of their siege train was more far-reaching than the generals at the time conceived, although some few men appear to have understood its necessary result. It in fact changed what was intended to be a rapid *coup de main* into a regular siege—and a regular siege of an imperfect and inefficient character, because the allied forces were not strong enough to invest the town. And this change brought with it still further the necessity of employing in a regular operation of war a body of troops equipped only for the pur-

Siege of
Sebastopol
determined on.

poses of an expedition. As a matter of course this change of plan forced upon the military administration in England wholly different arrangements. Preparation had not been made to meet the change of circumstances. The work thrown upon the administration was beyond its powers; the terrible suffering of the army during the ensuing winter was the inevitable result.

The first idea of the generals however was confined to the reduction of the fire of the place by means of their heavy siege artillery, to be followed by an immediate assault. By the arrangements made with regard to the possession of Balacava harbour, the bombardment of the suburb, including the Malakoff and the Redan, fell to the English; the French undertook to carry it out against the city itself, directing their fire principally against the Flagstaff battery. To secure Balacava, Sir Colin Campbell was stationed there with the Highland regiment. On a plain at the foot of the Sapoune ridge, bounding the plateau, were the English cavalry. Along the ridge a division of the French army was placed. The inconveniencies of such a position are obvious. The supplies of the English had to be transported some distance, and to pass a portion of the French army before reaching the troops; Balacava, of the last importance, was weakly defended, and cut off from the immediate command of the English general by the interposition of a French division. Slowly the siege trains were landed and brought into position in the batteries marked out by the engineers. The ground in front of the English was very rocky and difficult, and the guns were, of necessity, placed at a considerable distance from the defences of the town. The size of the guns however, and the skill with which they were placed, sufficed as it proved to make them thoroughly efficacious. The French, to whom the ground afforded better opportunity, contrived to place their batteries considerably nearer, but, as it proved, in not so well-chosen a position. It was not till the 16th of October that these preparations were completed. Anxious to make the bombardment as thorough as possible, the allied generals had demanded the co-operation of the fleets; and somewhat contrary to the wish of Dundas and his captains it had been determined that a diversion upon the sea-front should accompany both the bombardment and assault.

But the time spent in landing the siege trains had largely altered the conditions of the contest. With their *morale* shaken by their late defeat, conscious of the insufficiency of their numbers, with their defences incomplete, and deserted as they

Position of the
allied armies.

Preparations of
the Russians.

thought by their commander and his troops, the sailor garrison of Sebastopol had at first lived in hourly dread of an assault which they believed themselves unable to repel. The energy of Korniloff and the skill of Todleben had by this time roused the temper of the garrison, and had rendered the defences far more formidable; and in the beginning of October means had been taken to persuade Menschikoff to allow considerable bodies of troops to return to the town. The Prince's own plan had also been succeeding. Master of the road to Russia, he had been receiving constant reinforcements. Time was telling entirely in favour of the besieged, and it was almost with enthusiastic joy that the inhabitants discovered, by the breaking of the ground, that still further time was to be allowed them, and that the allies had determined upon something resembling a siege. While their batteries were building, Todleben so altered and improved his own as to bring an overwhelming fire to bear upon the French guns, while at the same time preparations were made for receiving any assault with a storm of cannon and rifle-shot.

On the 17th the great bombardment began. The English batteries gained the mastery over those opposed to them, but the efforts of the French, much reduced by the fire of the besieged, were brought to a speedy conclusion by a great explosion within their lines. Canrobert sent word to Lord Raglan that he should be unable to resume the fire for two days. The attack by the fleet had been to little purpose. Accepting the plans of the French admiral, Dundas had consented to an assault in line of battle from 1400 to 2000 yards distant from the batteries. At such a range the artillery of that period could produce no important result upon the strong masonry of the forts. An inshore squadron, under the command of Lyons, had indeed been detached, and had found a position upon the edge of a shoal covering the northern defences. At a distance of 800 yards it had destroyed the artillery upon the top of Fort Constantine, but even at that comparatively short distance had effected nothing against its walls; while the squadron, exposed to the fire of a small battery placed so high as to be unassailable from the sea, itself suffered severely. The result of the whole operation had been most disheartening. It seemed plain that the time for a rapid assault was over, and that tedious and dangerous siege operations must be undertaken; while upon the other side it was so fully demonstrated that the fleet was of no use against the harbour fortresses that no further assault upon them was ever attempted. Every day till the 25th of October the fire of the allies was continued. But

Bombardment
of Sebastopol.
Oct. 17.

under cover of this fire (always encountered by the ceaseless energy of Todleben) the change had begun, and the French were attacking the Flagstaff bastion by means of regular approaches. On that day the siege was somewhat rudely interrupted. The presence of the Russian army outside the walls and the defect in the position of the allies became evident.

The port of Balaclava, besides its inner defences under Sir Colin Campbell, was defended about half-way up the valley which led to it by an outer line, consisting of a row of redoubts in charge of Turkish troops. They were placed on a slight ridge along which ran the Woronzoff road, one of the means of access to the plateau. The valley was thus divided into two basins, of which the southern was entirely in the hands of the allies, and was occupied by the cavalry. The Russian army, having regained the hills on the other side of the Tchernaya, and being considerably reinforced, was free to move, and had been gradually drawing down upon the north and east of Balaclava. On the 25th, part of the army under Liprandi advanced from the direction of Kamara to attack the Turkish redoubts, while another part occupied the hills on the northern side of the north basin. The generals in command had warned Lord Raglan of the coming assault; but, apparently believing that it was a false report, such as had once before caused him unnecessarily to move his troops, he took no measures for preventing it. The only troops therefore at hand to check the Russian advance were the heavy brigade of cavalry under Lord Lucan. Neither Sir Colin Campbell nor Lord Lucan appear to have supposed that they could employ cavalry alone to much advantage. Three of the redoubts were taken, the Turks after a brave resistance flying from them, and leaving behind seven English guns. When Liprandi's advance became certain, two divisions of infantry were ordered down to oppose it; but their coming was slow, and for a considerable time the cavalry, withdrawn towards the heights occupied by the allies, sat idly looking on at the enemy's successes. The Heavy Brigade, under General Scarlett, was subsequently ordered to move across the southern valley to assist in the defence of the narrow passage at Kadikoi which led to Balaclava, in case the enemy should be really intending so serious a blow as the capture of that town. While on the march in all security (for the south valley was regarded as English ground), General Scarlett saw coming across the ridge dividing the valleys the whole of the Russian cavalry in a vast column of between 2000 and 3000 men. He had with him the Inniskillings and the Scotch Greys, and was fol-

Battle of
Balaclava.
Oct. 25.

lowed by the 5th Dragoons. The regiments immediately at hand were about 300 strong. It seemed as if they must be at once entirely annihilated. Instead of pushing on, the enemy halted upon the slope of the heights. Of this mistake advantage was at once taken. General Scarlett, personally leading the way, charged with his 300 horsemen full in the face of the massive column. Too small in number to destroy the vast mass opposed to them, the Greys and Inniskillings, breaking through the enemy's ranks, worked themselves into the heart of the column, by degrees actually cutting their way through, and turning back again. Their fate must still have been doubtful had not some support arrived. The other regiments of the Brigade came up, and one squadron of the Inniskillings, which had been separated from the rest of the regiment and was already in advance, charged upon the left flank of the enemy, while the dragoons fell upon his right. The massive Russian column began to give ground, and before long its slight retrograde movement became a complete retreat. It dissolved and retired in disorder. Few such instances of successful daring are on record. The whole brigade employed did not count more than eight squadrons, the original assailants were but 300, yet the Russian cavalry, numbering perhaps as many thousands, was entirely routed. But though the English cavalry had performed this astonishing act of war it was not well commanded. The Light Brigade, under Lord Cardigan, stood quietly by and took no part either in the contest or in completing the ruin by assaulting the broken column. A few Russian squadrons about the same time had ridden down towards Balaclava where the 93d were placed, but had quickly withdrawn before the fire with which they were received. By this time the allied generals were upon the heights overlooking the battlefield. Lord Raglan was much distressed at the slowness with which his infantry were making their way to the scene. He saw that the impression made by the charge of the Heavy Brigade was very great, that the enemy's infantry pushed along the two heights was virtually cut in two, and that in all probability that part of it which held the conquered redoubts would be easily induced to yield its ground. He thought that even cavalry alone might probably effect much, and despatched a written order to Lord Lucan to advance and attempt what he could in the way of regaining the redoubts, assuring him of the approach of supporting infantry. Lord Lucan, a man of much ability but of much self-will, either accidentally or wilfully misinterpreted the order, not believing, apparently, that cavalry would be of use alone, and preferring to read the direction

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as implying that he was to support the infantry and not the infantry to support him. As no infantry was visible, he remained immovable. Taking advantage of the inaction, the enemy was proceeding to carry off the conquered guns. Losing patience at the sight, the Commander-in-Chief despatched Captain Nolan with a second written order to Lord Lucan to advance immediately, and save the guns. As Lord Raglan had a full view of the battlefield, there was every reason to believe that he fully understood what was to be done. But Lord Lucan asked, "What am I to do? What guns?" and Captain Nolan, losing temper and speaking probably in an irritating and insulting way, pointed forward and said, "The enemy is there, and there are your guns." Lord Lucan chose to believe that the guns intended were a battery of twelve pieces at the extreme eastern end of the north valley, behind which the broken cavalry of the Russians had re-formed. To reach them it would be necessary to traverse the whole length of the valley. Along the containing ridges to the north and south of this valley the enemy's forces had advanced, so that in order to reach the battery the force would have to run the gauntlet between two lines of infantry and artillery, and meet the full fire of the battery in face. This was the extraordinary operation which Lord Lucan declares that he understood to be ordered by Lord Raglan. It was to carry out this that he instructed Lord Cardigan, refused to listen to his remonstrances, and sent the Light Brigade to its destruction. As an act of courage and devotion nothing could have been finer. With perfect and unswerving gallantry Lord Cardigan, having placed himself at the head of the first line, galloped against the guns. With ranks terribly thinned by the fire with which they were struck during their advance, the regiments which were immediately with him drove the enemy from their cannon, and pushed on beyond towards the Russian cavalry. The other regiments, which had been arranged as supports, arrived in turn in the same plight, and a wild and broken succession of charges took place. Reduced as they were, and scattered into handfuls, the English broke through whatever opposed them. But the effort was of course from the first entirely a hopeless one. Lord Cardigan, having completed his charge, had withdrawn, as some thought rather too early from the field. There was no general officer to give command, and the men collecting, almost irrespective of regiments, on the two sides of the valley, were at length brought out of action by Lord George Paget and Colonel Shewell. Even their retreat was blocked by some squadrons of Russian Lancers who had not yet been engaged. Through those who

opposed him Colonel Shewell and his followers rode, while upon the other side Lord George Paget passed across the very front of the enemy, who for some reason failed to charge and destroy them. The retreat was favoured by a well-executed operation of the French cavalry, who carried out upon the northern ridge of the valley the same movement which Lord Raglan had intended his troops to carry out upon the southern ridge, and with apparently very slight loss silenced the batteries on that side. Of the 673 that went into action but 195 mounted men were counted at the roll-call after the retreat. It appears that 113 men and 475 horses were killed, 134 men and 42 horses wounded. Blundering and loss of temper had thus cost the English in the course of twenty minutes two-thirds of their Light Cavalry. As a military operation the charge was an error of a most terrible sort, and as such was judged by Lord Raglan. As an act of heroic bravery and blind self-devotion it excited the warmest enthusiasm in England, and undoubtedly had the good effect of giving the troops a profound belief in their superiority to their enemies. Stripped of all ornament and narrated in cold words, it affects the hearer with distress and horror at the miserable blunder which caused it. It is difficult to conceive the violence of the mingled sentiments of rage and admiration which must have filled the spectators as they watched from the heights the terrible tragedy which was enacted before their eyes. When the infantry divisions subsequently arrived on the plain it would have been possible to have regained the ground which had been lost early in the day, especially as the feats of the English cavalry had gone far to dishearten the Russians. But already, before the battle, the conviction had been forcing itself upon the allied commanders that the outer line of defence at Balacava was wider than they could possibly hold without diminishing the troops necessary for the siege. Liprandi was therefore allowed quietly to retain the position he had won, and the Russians in Sebastopol gained fresh confidence, as they learned that a distinct impression had been made upon the English lines and seven pieces of cannon captured.

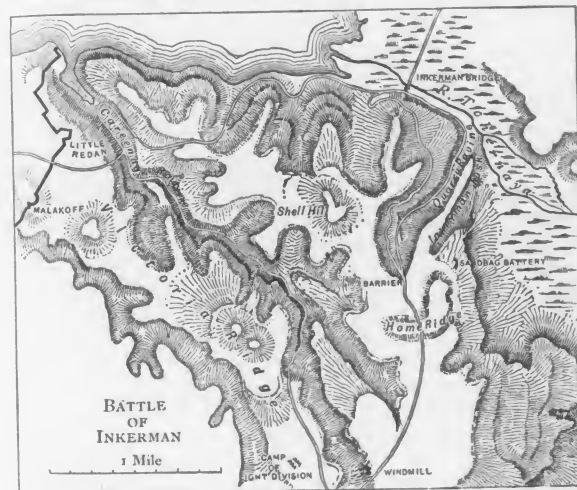
The battle of Balacava was but a first stroke in the great attempt which had been preparing for the relief of the town and the destruction of the invaders. The separate action of England and France had dissolved the European concert; and the German Powers, satisfied with the withdrawal of the Russians from the Principalities, had adopted a policy of neutrality, only so far modified that an Austrian army had entered and occupied Wallachia and Moldavia. Far from attaining its object, this form of

Russian reinforcements arrive in Sebastopol.

coercion had been in fact of the greatest value to the Czar; war on the Danube was effectually stopped, and the troops who were there employed were set at liberty to oppose the formidable invasion of the Crimea. Somewhat slowly, for our command of the sea compelled them to follow the long coast route, reinforcements had continued to arrive. And now more than 100,000 men were collected under Prince Menschikoff, to whom the Allies could oppose less than 70,000. The English infantry had dwindled to 16,000. The French, gradually increasing their strength, were about 40,000. To these must be added the sailors, and a certain amount of Turkish troops. Again time was of the last importance, and again it seemed impossible to the Allies to proceed with sufficient rapidity. The siege-works of the French had been pushed on as quickly as possible, and by the 4th of November were so close to the Flagstaff Battery that on the next day it was intended that the long-deferred assault should take place. On that very day the Russian commander, aware of the approaching crisis, and equally conscious of the necessity of haste, was ready to make the great effort which was to oblige the allies to relax their hold upon their prey.

The lines occupied by the allied armies, extending from the mouth of the harbour to the west, followed roughly the fortifications of the town, crossed to the valley of the Tchernaya, and, passing along the Sapoune Ridge bounding the plateau, fell off south and east, and included the port of Balaklava. Their whole extent was nearly twenty miles. The number of troops at the command of the allied generals did not suffice to carry on the siege, to hold this long line, and to keep any considerable central body of reserves. Attacked on any part of their line they could only support the troops assailed by drawing reinforcements either from the siege or from some other part of their defences. At the north-east corner of the plateau a mass roughly triangular in shape was broken off from the heights, and connected with them by an isthmus or neck of no great width. This mass was generally known as Mount Inkerman. It sank down at its extreme north-east corner to the Inkerman bridge over the Tchernaya. It had been impossible to include this mass completely in the English position, and the Second Division, to whom the defence in that direction was intrusted, occupied a ridge which crossed the isthmus about half-way down its length, but English pickets and outposts covered a portion of Mount Inkerman. Troops taking possession of Shell Hill, the top of this mass, and advancing successfully against the Second Division upon the Home Ridge, as it was called, would have opened an access to the

plateau. The intention of the Russians, who knew the weakness of the allied armies in point of numbers, was to place an army on this hill, and driving before it the defenders of the ridge, to clear a way for fresh troops to mount from the valley of the Tchernaya, and thus occupy with a large force the Sapoune Ridge at the east of the plateau. For the attack of Mount Inkerman an army of 40,000 was prepared. They were to march from two directions, from Sebastopol itself, and from the Inkerman Bridge, and, meeting at the top, were to form one army under General



Dannenberg. Meanwhile General Gorchakoff, with the 22,000 troops which had fought the battle of Balaklava, was to make such demonstration of assault in the valley of the Tchernaya as should prevent the despatch of reinforcements to the division on the ridge, and should be ready, as soon as the opening was afforded, at once to ascend the heights and join the victorious army of Dannenberg. The deep indentation which divided the Inkerman mass from the plateau, and formed the contraction of the neck upon the west or town side, was known as the Careenage Ravine, and ran far back past the English position on the

Home Ridge, dying out at the very end of the isthmus at what was known as the Windmill Heights. Upon the eastern side another deep ravine ran inwards from the Tchernaya valley, immediately under the Shell Hill, coming out on the top of the ridge about half a mile in front of the English lines. This was known as the Quarry Ravine. It lay completely under the command of guns placed on the Shell Hill, and formed an admirable cover for the organisation of assaults. At the end there was a small loose stone wall or parapet, used as the position of the central picket, and known as the Barrier. Up this ravine ran the post road, which passed along the neck and through the centre of the English lines. The side of the ravine opposite to the Shell Hill ran out to abrupt and inaccessible heights, and was known as the Inkerman Tusk. Behind it, across another depression, was a terrace part way down the hillside, on which there was erected an earthwork called the Sandbag Battery, some nine feet in height, now deserted and without guns.

Before dawn, and under cover of a thick mist, the enemy began to carry out their plan. General Soimonoff, with his column, coming from the city, took possession unperceived of Shell Hill; and without waiting for the arrival of the column from the Inkerman Bridge made an assault along the eastern side of the Careenage Ravine, thus coming upon the left flank of the English on the Home Ridge. The formation of the ground was such that the outposts, when driven in, would converge towards the main position, where artillery was placed; and that position was so strong that small numbers might well hold it. This plan of defence had been successfully adopted by General Evans a few days before, when, by means of his artillery, he had entirely driven off a Russian assault which seemed to be a sort of rehearsal of the great battle. But Evans was absent invalided with the fleet, and the command had devolved on General Pennefather, a man of a very vigorous and combative disposition. When the outposts came in contact with the advancing enemy, and instead of falling back seemed much disposed to hold their ground, he adopted the plan of reinforcing them, and thus undertaking a defence of an offensive character, attacking the advancing Russians wherever they were encountered before they approached his line. It naturally resulted from the adoption of this plan of defence that the battle assumed the form of a series of almost unconnected combats, and that an opportunity was afforded for feats of individual gallantry, and of successes almost inconceivable won by a few resolute men against

Battle of Inkerman.
man.
Nov. 4.

great masses of opponents. But it was scarcely possible to maintain any supervision, or to exercise any of the usual duties of generalship. There was scarcely any opportunity for employing the troops in their usual formations, and a very terrible risk was incurred by stripping of its defenders that position on the ridge which was the real rampart against the influx of the Russians. The various bodies or clusters of men by whom the battle was maintained were frequently composed of soldiers of several different regiments, or of men commanded by officers of different regiments from their own. During some part of the day there must have been less than 500 men holding the ridge; and though success seems to vindicate the tactics adopted, the risk was very great. In fact at one time the line of the ridge was broken through, and nothing but the arrival of French supports could have saved the army. The history of such a battle becomes little more than the narration of the gallant deeds of individual men, or individual corps, or fragments of corps. But it may be described generally as consisting of three great assaults upon the English lines. The first of these was made by Soimonoff before the general command of the battle was taken by Dannenberg. It was directed along the eastern side of the Careenage Ravine, and supported by a simultaneous assault upon the east by two regiments of Pauloff's column, which was advancing from Inkerman Bridge. In each case it was encountered in the same way by small and isolated bodies of English troops, and so successfully that the 15,000 men engaged in it were driven entirely from the field. General Soimonoff was himself killed. The second assault took place after the arrival of Dannenberg, and under the cover of an artillery of more than ninety pieces which he had placed in position on Shell Hill. It was directed against the centre (approached by the Quarry Ravine) and the right of the Allies. The assault upon the right involved much of the fiercest fighting of the day. Although it was no real part of the English position, the deserted Sandbag Battery became an object for the possession of which both parties struggled with the greatest fury. The defence, begun by General Adams with the 41st and part of the 49th Regiments, was maintained by the Guards upon their arrival on the ground. The battery was again and again taken and retaken, and the combat drew towards it troops which were sorely wanted elsewhere. At length, with the assistance of General Cathcart, who, by a great error of judgment, had descended from the hill and brought his troops to assist in the battle, the Guards seemed to win a complete victory, only to find that they had separated themselves from the

English lines, and laid themselves open to an attack upon their rear, from which even the regimental colours were with the greatest difficulty extricated. In the centre a series of columns were pushed forward against the English ridge; in most cases they were encountered and checked by small bodies of infantry. One column penetrated indeed to the crest of the ridge itself, but in no instance did they succeed in taking the barrier at the head of the ravine, which remained throughout in English hands. The third and most dangerous assault (for the English troops were nearly worn out, ammunition was scarce, and a third of their scanty numbers had to be employed for opposing a possible advance upon their left) was made by a strong column directly upon the centre. It came on, surrounded by a cloud of loosely arranged skirmishers, who, subsequently forming a vanguard, actually crossed the ridge. The presence of a somewhat unsteady regiment of the French line, aided by the invincible courage of the remnants of the English, proved sufficient not only to drive back from the ridge those who had reached it, but subsequently to break and overthrow the main column. After the repulse of this assault there was a space of some forty minutes during which the position of the Allies was most critical. For the English were becoming exhausted, and such of the French as had come up had not proved thoroughly trustworthy, and were feeling much discouragement at the scattered and broken appearance of the English. Lord Raglan, who, though he had left the immediate command to General Pennefather, had been constantly present on the field, had however ordered up from the siege-works two heavy cannon. They had asserted their predominance; and this, together with his constant repulses and the continued maintenance on the part of the English of all their advanced positions, prevented Dannenberg from taking advantage of the opportunity, till the arrival of General Bosquet with considerable French supports changed the aspect of the day. It is true that the allies of the English did not render them so much service as might have been expected. Bosquet repeated the error of the morning, and involved his troops in difficulties on the Tusk, from which he only extricated them by a forced and hasty retreat. Though the French were at first heavily discouraged by this false movement, the inaction of the enemy restored their confidence, and fresh reinforcements arriving, there came a time when the allied generals had at their disposal troops of all arms to the number of 13,000, of whom 5000 or 6000 had not as yet fired a shot; while the enemy, though still superior in numbers—still in possession of 9000 unused troops, was suffering

from the depression of constant defeat, and from the superiority of our artillery fire. General Canrobert, however, was contented with the success gained. After eleven o'clock the French took no further part in the fight. For two hours longer the English maintained a scattered aggressive warfare, with such success that at one o'clock Dannenberg ordered a retreat. The time had now arrived, it would seem, when a general advance of the Allies would have turned defeat into complete disaster. For although Dannenberg's retreat was covered by his 9000 fresh men, the difficulty of withdrawing his vast artillery in the face of an advancing enemy would have been overwhelming. Such an advance was suggested by Pennefather and Lord Raglan. Canrobert refused the suggestion, to his subsequent great regret, and the Russians were able to carry off their troops and artillery in good order and without further loss.

Indeed from one point of view the attack upon Inkerman had been successful. Its main object had been to prevent the ^{Effect of the} threatened assault upon the Flagstaff Battery. And ^{battle.} at a council held the following day Lord Raglan thought it necessary to yield to Canrobert's suggestion that the losses in the battle, coupled with the proof that had been given of the vast numbers of the enemy, rendered the renewal of the assault unwise. The fatal resolve was taken again to postpone it, and thus the terrible alternative of wintering the army where it stood was practically adopted, for at no subsequent period were the Allies in condition to renew the assault. The winter was upon them, and the miserable sufferings which it brought with it reduced them so low that the siege-works, which were persistently carried on, were in point of fact necessary defensive works for their own preservation. Any sign of relaxation in their efforts, any attempt to withdraw, would have been followed inevitably by assaults which they were certainly quite unfitted to encounter.

Winter may be said to have begun on the 14th of November, when a terrible hurricane swept over Sebastopol, bringing with it rain and hail, and even snow. The destruction it caused was very great. Not only did it sweep down all the English tents and leave the men, even the sick and wounded, exposed to its ^{Miseries of the} fury, but it fell upon the crowded port and roadstead of ^{army in the} Balaclava and wrought havoc among the shipping. Immense quantities of stores, on account of the narrowness of the landing-place, had been left on board the ships; and among the vessels which fell victims to the gale were two of paramount importance, the one containing the greater part of the new supplies of ammunition for the army, the

other, the *Prince*, laden with the warm clothing which was needed for the coming season. From this time onward, though with occasional returns of fair weather, there was constant winter, not apparently abnormally cold, but wet and foggy when it was not snowing or freezing sharply. It brought with it a long string of miseries, some inevitable, some the fruit of mistaken strategy and faulty administration. The soldiers lying under canvas were not properly protected. The labour they were called upon to give was of a constant and exhausting character, digging in the wet half-frozen trenches, or sitting cowering, cramped, and motionless, to avoid the fire of the enemy while covering the working parties. There was no actual want of food, though the rations were sometimes deficient, but the food was chiefly biscuit and salt meat, which the wearied soldier could not always bring himself even to cook, but either bartered it with the French or ate it raw. Ever since the army had been in the East its health had been affected; it had brought with it the seeds of the cholera and choleraic illness from the camp at Varna. Cold, exposure, and food of the very kind best adapted for the promotion of scurvy, working upon the already weakened frames of the soldiers, produced a fearful amount of illness and death. Nor were proper sanitary precautions adopted. The plateau was covered with decaying carcasses of horses and mules, besides the accumulated filth of the camps themselves. The army was in fact so reduced that in January the rank and file at Lord Raglan's disposal numbered only 11,367 men; at the end of February there were upwards of 13,000 men in hospital, and the deaths from sickness alone had been 8898. The suffering did not end with sickness. The organisation for attending the sick and wounded with the army was bad; the arrangements for transport were defective; and the general hospitals established at Scutari were crowded and unsanitary, without proper provision or supplies of medical requisites, and so little resembling what hospitals should be that the death-rate in some of them was more than 50 per cent.

It is pretty certain that in many respects the French army was suffering as heavily, but their strongly centralised government enabled them to throw a cloak over their deficiencies, while in England the presence of correspondents of the newspapers brought all facts before the public eye, dressed in exaggerated and picturesque language. The indignation of the people of England began to grow strong, and the *Times* newspaper employed all the great ability of its writers in giving it expres-

Anger of
England against
the supposed
mismanage-
ment.

sion. Lord Raglan himself was a man of such character and importance, of such recognised ability, and so necessary at the time, that the popular anger somewhat spared him, and concentrated itself on the members of his staff. He was indeed accused of ignorance of the condition of his army, of secluding himself and neglecting that personal inspection which would have taught him the truth, and of keeping from the Government such facts as he knew. It was General Airey, the Quartermaster-General; Estcourt, the Adjutant-General; and Filder, the Chief of the Commissariat, who were the principal marks against whom the popular anger was directed. All sorts of complaints as to mismanagement were rife and readily believed. Men could not bring themselves to understand that it was no one's fault that the stores plentifully supplied lay idle and rotting at Balaclava because there was no decent road to bring them to the front, and no land transport to take them even had the road existed. It was impossible not to suppose that there was grave and cruel mismanagement in hospitals wanting the commonest medical necessities, or in the supply of green coffee to the troops when they had no fuel to roast it. Yet the officers popularly held responsible for this mismanagement were able, efficient, and devoted. With few exceptions everything within their power had been done. So far from being ignorant of the condition of his troops, Lord Raglan had in fact sent home—though of course either in official language or in words tending rather to cheer than to cause despair—the fullest accounts of what had happened, accompanied with statistics which told their own tale. So far from being secluded or self-indulgent, he worked constantly day and night; and although it is true that in the earlier part of the siege, in his desire to spare the men from the necessity of turning out to salute him, he had rather refrained from showing himself, he subsequently repeatedly visited every part of his camp and all his hospitals. He had indeed exercised unusual and successful foresight. On the loss of the *Prince*, he had on his own authority purchased a sufficiency of warm clothing at Constantinople, without waiting for renewed supplies to be sent from England. He had ransacked the Mediterranean to procure wood to build huts for his troops. He had given and enforced orders that vegetables should be procured wherever possible. He had tried his best, with hired workmen, to make a firm road from Balaclava, but had failed. And with regard to his subordinates he declared, and it was impossible to doubt his judgment, that no man could have done his duty more efficiently and devotedly than General Airey.

Yet the evils complained of really existed. The cause of them lay partly in the extraordinary clumsiness of the English military administration in time of war, and partly in the peculiar conditions under which the campaign was being carried on. The real difficulty which lay at the bottom of most of the suffering was the want of land transport. The army, originally despatched and equipped for a short expedition, to be speedily closed it was believed with the capture of a city which would afford abundant means of supply, had been furnished with all that was necessary for this purpose. But the expedition had gradually grown into a campaign. Under ordinary conditions a campaign, including the orderly possession of the country in which the army is acting, implies the use of the supplies and especially of the forage which the country affords. But the strategy of the Allies had induced them to surrender the command of all the country, with the exception of one bleak plateau producing nothing; and it became a necessity that the forage—an exceedingly bulky article—should, with other necessities, be supplied by sea. For this exigency the Government at home was not prepared. And although the Commissary-General had the right of purchase in other countries, and did, in fact, purchase as much as he conveniently could, his suggestions to the Treasury (which was the department under which the commissariat was at first placed) were subject to the judgment of the officials in England; and to them it seemed unnecessary to send out large supplies of hay. It was not therefore horses and mules that were wanted, but the means of feeding them. The commissariat officers refused to purchase largely animals which they knew they could not keep alive. Again the movement to the south side of Sebastopol had rendered the army dependent upon one contracted and inconvenient port. Thus there was no room for the proper storage and disembarkation of the vast supplies, and they were left lying in the ships either in the harbour or roadstead to be wasted and spoilt, and exposed to such a risk as that of the hurricane of the 14th of November. They could not be landed, and when landed they could not be forwarded, for this sole harbour was separated by ten miles from the camp. Two roads might have been used for the purpose of connecting the two; the one was a hard road known as the Woronzoff road, crossing the valley of Balacava, and so up the heights; the other was a mere clay track passing up the Col to the heights. The submission of the Allies to the capture by Liprandi of the Woronzoff road in the battle of Balacava deprived the English of the only sound road. In the storms of winter the valley

around Balacava became a mere sea of mud, and the clay road all but impassable. But again this difficulty at least might have been got over by a large employment of labour. But the expeditionary army was only just sufficient to supply the men necessary for carrying on its warlike operations when it undertook the siege, and as by the arrangement between the allied commanders the lion's share of the work was thrown upon the English, numerically the weakest part of the force, the labour on which the troops were necessarily employed precluded the possibility of detaching a sufficient number of men for such work as road-making. The same cause prevented the large employment of human labour for the purposes of land transport, and prevented the troops from going down themselves to fetch the supplies which were lying waiting for them. Yet although the cause of the evils may be thus explained, it cannot be denied that the long cessation of warfare had rendered the English army somewhat unfit for immediate action in the field, and that a want of invention and of ready adaptation to circumstances was characteristic both of the men themselves and of their officers. Certain facts make this evident. The naval brigade did not suffer; the sailors got what they wanted, and succeeded in making themselves decently comfortable. The French soldiers, underfed, miserably housed in their little *tentes d'abri*, yet found means to procure fuel by digging for roots, cooked such meat as they had in a proper fashion, and being supplied with regimental bakeries were seldom without fresh bread. They also had well-organised ambulance corps at the beginning of the campaign; at all events their hospitals were thoroughly good. Even in the English army some regiments, as the 7th Fusiliers, managed, by employing the regimental horses and the chargers of the officers, to go down to Balacava and bring up what they wanted. But the ordinary English soldier, trusting entirely to the commissariat and to the arrangements made for him, found himself unable to supply any deficiencies which occurred.

The misfortunes of the Crimean winter had produced a most powerful effect upon the English mind, and gave rise to events disclosing at once the strength and weakness of the peculiar type of Democratic government existing in England. Even more than at present the *Times* newspaper of that time aimed at representing public opinion. It seldom led it. Its skill lay in saying what was in everybody's mind an hour or two before it had found expression elsewhere. It may thus be regarded as a thoroughly good exponent of the general feeling. It had played an

Popular demand
for change of
Ministry.

important part in preventing the closing of the questions at issue upon the evacuation of the Principalities, and in demanding the attack upon the Crimea as a further and more permanent means of checking the ambition of Russia. It had sung the praises of the battle of Alma with enthusiasm, and, unduly sanguine, it had accepted as true the false rumour of the capture of Sebastopol. It now, as angry and despondent as it had been hopeful, wrote in vehement language of the shortcomings of the army officials and of the military decadence of England. It supplied the words that were wanted by the general feeling. Rage at official mismanagement, pity for the suffering soldiers, shame at the sorry position it appeared to occupy, filled the heart of England. But in the system of party government a Ministry can remain in office only so long as it satisfies on the whole the national wishes, and sympathises in some degree with the common feelings of the time. The Ministry of Lord Aberdeen no longer occupied that position. The Duke of Newcastle, conscious of his own efforts, and believing in his own ability, was indeed ready to join in the general outcry against the officers in the Crimea, and hoping to exonerate himself and his colleagues from all charge of mismanagement, tried to persuade Lord Raglan to make alterations in his headquarter staff. But the general refused in any way to abet a proceeding which would throw blame upon men whom he thoroughly trusted, and the Ministry were forced themselves to abide the onslaught of popular indignation.

On the 12th of December, at an unusually early time, Parliament was again assembled, to enable the Ministers to bring in measures for the further continuation of the war. Two Bills were introduced ; the one to allow the enlistment of foreigners, the supply of English recruits having proved insufficient ; the other to authorise the employment of the militia in our colonies and elsewhere, in such a way as to set free the regular troops. A vote of thanks was also moved both to the army and navy. It was impossible that such measures should be taken without affording an opportunity for a general assault upon the management of the war, or without allowing the Ministers a chance of vindicating their conduct. The Duke of Newcastle, on whom this duty chiefly devolved, unable to deny the existence of grave evils, made the best of what had been done. He pointed out that although the Russian fleet had not been destroyed, it was confined to its harbour, the trade of Russia had been destroyed, and that as soon as it became evident that the hope of the immediate capture of Sebastopol

Assault on the
Government in
Parliament.
Dec. 1854.

was ill-founded, supplies and reinforcements had been sent out as fast as possible to the army. The Bills were speedily passed, the vote of thanks given, and the House adjourned till the 23d of January. During this brief respite the public mind, unsatisfied by the explanations of the Ministry, excited by further articles in the papers, became more and more inflamed, and Parliament had scarcely renewed its sittings when Mr. Roebuck made himself the mouthpiece of the popular indignation, and gave notice of his intention to move for a Select Committee to inquire into the condition of our army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those departments of Government whose duty it was to minister to the wants of that army. The assault was felt by the Ministers themselves to be fatal. Lord John Russell, who had already been urging that Lord Palmerston should be placed at the head of the War Department, declared that resistance was impossible, and withdrew. Thus severely shaken by the defection of their leader in the Lower House, the Government, after a debate of two nights, was defeated by a majority of 157. Of course they at once resigned.

Fall of the
Aberdeen
Ministry.
Feb. 1855.

But the motion which had caused their defeat implied much more than a change of Ministry. The people of England who had insisted upon the war, who had insisted upon its continuation by the invasion of the Crimea, now disappointed at its want of success, were apparently determined to supersede the executive power, and to take the management of the war into their own hands. As Prince Albert was reported to have said, our Parliamentary institutions were upon their trial. The question which had to be answered was whether a great war could be carried to a successful conclusion under the blaze of publicity, when every action was exposed not only to the criticism and discussion of the press, but also to the more formidable and dangerous demands of party warfare within the walls of Parliament. And it seemed now as though the people had gone far towards accepting the idea that our Parliamentary system had failed to produce an executive of sufficient strength to perform its duty under these conditions.

Parliamentary
institutions
on their trial.

CHAPTER VI.

LORD PALMERSTON'S MINISTRY, February 22, 1855.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Palmerston.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Cranworth.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Granville.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Duke of Argyll.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Sir George Lewis.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir George Grey.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord John Russell.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Clarendon.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Lord Panmure.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Sir Charles Wood.
<i>President of the Board of Control,</i>	Mr. Vernon Smith.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Lord Stanley of Alderley.
<i>First Commissioner of Works,</i>	Sir William Molesworth.
<i>Postmaster General,</i>	Lord Canning.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Lord Harrowby.
<i>(In the Cabinet, but without office),</i>	Lord Lansdowne.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Carlisle.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Brady.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Mr. Horsman.

The following changes subsequently took place in July 1855:—

<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Harrowby.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	{ Sir W. Molesworth, July. Mr. H. Labouchere, November.
<i>Postmaster General,</i>	Duke of Argyll.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Mr. Baines.
<i>First Commissioner of Works,</i>	Sir B. Hall.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Clanricarde, January 1858.
<i>Chief Secretary for Ireland,</i>	Mr. Henry Herbert, May 1857.

THE crisis was brought to an end for the time by the formation of a Ministry under Lord Palmerston. Lord John Russell at the head of the Whigs, Lord Derby at the head of the Conservatives, attempted the task in vain. As at the last crisis in 1852, a coalition appeared necessary to command success, and it resulted that the same Ministers, with the exception

Palmerston's
Ministry.
Feb. 10, 1855.

only of Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle, returned to office. but these two statesmen had held the most important places, the one as Prime Minister, the other as War Secretary; their successors were men of very different character. Lord Aberdeen had from the first been half-hearted in the war, which he had entered against his own convictions, and which, though acting loyally in union with his colleagues, he had always detested. The Duke of Newcastle, to whom almost accidentally the Ministry of War had fallen, was a man of much will and energy, but had displayed no pre-eminent gifts for the office. He had been originally appointed to the Secretaryship of the Colonies, to which the Ministry of War was attached, the business of the War Office being carried on by the Secretary at War. When hostilities broke out it was thought desirable to separate the departments, and on the choice being offered to him the Duke of Newcastle had chosen the more important and arduous. The new Premier was a man whose capacity for work, command of detail, and extraordinary determination were well known, and who had throughout been the leader of the war party in the Cabinet; while Lord Panmure, the new War Secretary, somewhat rugged and violent, had already (as Mr. Fox Maule) executed the duties of Secretary at War in Lord John Russell's administration with thorough ability and success. For the instant therefore the nation was satisfied with the change.

Yet, as originally constituted, the Ministry lasted but a few days. The question at once arose whether the Government should allow or resist the appointment of Mr. Roebuck's Committee. A Parliamentary Committee to supervise the action of the executive appeared to the Peelites in the Cabinet so fraught with danger to the Constitution that, when Lord Palmerston declared it impossible to resist the late vote of the House, they thought it right to resign. The places of the outgoing Ministers—Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert—were taken respectively by Sir Charles Wood, Sir George Cornwall Lewis, and Lord John Russell, and thus what was in fact a purely Whig administration, under a new leader, was formed. Fully awake to the possible danger of the Committee—yet believing it impossible for the Government to refuse it—the Premier attempted to lessen any evil effect it might have by obtaining the leave of the House to nominate it himself. Almost as a matter of course Mr. Roebuck, its originator, was appointed Chairman, and immediately set to work with extreme energy to collect information and prepare the report.

Meanwhile a great accession of vigour was at once shown in the War administration. Changes were made by which the army, as far as discipline was concerned, passed entirely into the hands of the Commander-in-Chief. A special Board was appointed to superintend the transport service. Two officers were despatched to examine into the reported deficiency of the commissariat; and General Simpson, with the title of Chief of the Staff, an office hitherto unknown in the English army, was sent out with instructions to inquire carefully into the conduct of the departments of the Quartermaster and Adjutant-General. It seemed possible that affairs were taking a better turn. The Duke of Newcastle, during his term of office, had recommended the formation of a railway from Balaclava, and this, under private contract with a great industrial firm, was now rapidly pressed on. Lord Palmerston, who had already distinguished himself at the Home Office by his zeal for sanitary improvements, took measures for inquiring into and remedying the deficiencies in the arrangements of that description both in the Crimea and in the hospitals at Scutari. And for a while there was a renewed hope that a Congress sitting at Vienna (at which England was represented by Lord John Russell) might produce a plan which should bring the war to a happy conclusion—a hope rendered stronger by the unexpected death of the Emperor of Russia in the beginning of March.

But any expectations thus raised proved illusory. The Conference at Vienna had been summoned by Austria, which was interested before all other countries, except perhaps England, in the maintenance of Turkish independence, and yet bound by ties of gratitude and much political sympathy to the Czar. The demands of the Allies were formulated under four heads. These were the release of the Principalities of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia from Russian control; the free navigation of the mouths of the Danube; the modification of former treaties, so as to prevent the undue preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea; and the abandonment, on the part of the Czar, of his claim to exclusive protectorate over the Greek Christians in the Ottoman Empire. On summoning the Conference, Austria had stated that, if upon the basis of these four points negotiation should fail, the defensive treaty already existing between her and the Western Powers should be changed into an offensive alliance. The Conference met on the 5th of March, and the Russian representatives accepted without difficulty the principle of the first and second points. But Russia had all

Vigorous War
Administration.

The Vienna
Conference.
March 8 to
June 4.

along pretended to regard the war as a crusade, and in accordance with this view desired the priority of the religious question. This the English and French representatives refused to consider until the political question, which to them was much more important, had been settled. It was upon the third point therefore that the difficulties arose which brought the Conference to an end. The English and French ambassadors had been instructed to insist upon some limitation, by treaty, of the Russian Black Sea navy. Regarding any such formal limitation imposed upon them by the European Powers as derogatory to their honour, the Russian negotiators absolutely refused to accede to this suggestion, but were willing to allow the entire opening of the Black Sea to the war-ships of all nations, or to arrange by private treaty with the Porte some practical limitation of their own navy. The first of these proposals infringed the sovereign rights of the Sultan, who possessed both sides of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus; the second, rejected by the Turks, who were bound to negotiate only in common with the Allies, also left open the door to the skill of the Russian negotiators treating with a Power avowedly weaker than their own. The English and French ambassadors therefore, regarding such a plan as inadmissible, alleged the strict character of their instructions, and refused to consider it. The Conference was thus practically closed. But on the 4th of June Austria, through Count Buol, the President of the Conference, produced a fresh suggestion, not in fact much differing from that of Russia. He proposed that the naval equality of Russia and Turkey should be secured by a treaty between the two Powers, that the number of ships possessed by either should not exceed that of the present number of the Russian Black Sea fleet, that the Dardanelles should continue to be closed, but that by a firman two frigates of each of the other contracting parties should be allowed to enter the Black Sea; the terms of the separate treaty between Russia and Turkey were to form a part of the general treaty. Lord John Russell and the French ambassador had already left Vienna, but the representatives of England, France, and Turkey all declined to listen to the Austrian proposals, and the Conference was finally closed. Austria considered that by proposing a possible solution, and finding it rejected by the Allies, she had performed her duty, and refused to make the failure of the Conference a *casus belli*, as the English had expected. Her conduct excited much anger in England; her refusal to join in the war was regarded as a breach of contract; and it was further pointed out, as an illustration of her selfish conduct, that the first two points,

which were those of real interest to the Germans, had at once been settled, and that it was only when the points of English interest were brought forward that difficulties arose. The hopes based upon the death of Nicholas proved equally ill-grounded. The new Czar, Alexander, declared at once that he would maintain the policy of his predecessors, and it was in fact with his knowledge and co-operation that the terms of the Allies at the Conference had been rejected.

Though at present the Vienna negotiations produced no effect upon the war, they caused considerable difficulty to the Government in England. After their failure Lord John Russell, who had acted as our Plenipotentiary, spoke in strong language of the necessity of continuing the war; but it came to light, through a circular of the Russian Chancellor, that he had during his residence at Vienna declared his approval of the Austrian terms. He was accused loudly therefore by the Opposition of attempting to keep up a war which he in fact believed might have been brought to an honourable conclusion. He defended himself on the ground that he was acting under instructions, and was but the mouthpiece of the Cabinet, whatever his own opinion might be, and that subsequently he had fallen back to the Cabinet view of the question. That he had been indiscreet, however, was plain enough, and there was such a strong probability that a vote of censure would be passed against him in which the Ministry would be involved, that he thought it right to resign his office.

The virulent attack of the Opposition upon Russell was only one instance of the constant employment of the war as a means of party contest. Palmerston had been well received, on the supposition that he was the leader of the war party, and because he was known to have much sympathy with the common views of the time. But though he had infused new vigour into the administration, and so far bowed to the popular will as to send out commissioners of inquiry to the Crimea, implying the possibility at least of the truth of the charges popularly alleged against the officials there, the plight of the army in the early spring seemed very little improved. The same stories of suffering and mismanagement, the same incessant depreciation of the power of England, continued to be the favourite theme of the newspapers. The people also began to suffer from the high price of food, which, though perhaps it may be otherwise explained, was not unnaturally attributed to the cessation of trade with the country which at that time supplied us with the largest proportion of our foreign grain. The Ministry were

Resignation of
Lord John
Russell.
June 16.

Discontent
with the
Ministry.

therefore open to assaults on all sides. The lovers of peace impugned the wisdom of the rejection of the Russian offers at Vienna, and spoke of the sufferings entailed on the people. The war party reiterated their assaults upon the want of energy with which hostilities were carried on, and, while complaining of the incapacity of our officers, opened a door for exhibitions of class feeling, and such motions as that of Mr. Layard, that "the sacrifice of efficiency to family and party interest is a source of danger and shame to the country." The cry for administrative reform went even beyond the army; and motions were brought forward to be subsequently adopted—though means were found at present to get rid of them—for the opening of the services to public competition. In finance the apparently inevitable results of war had been reached. With a revenue amounting to the then unprecedented sum of £63,000,000 there was still a deficit of £20,000,000, and Sir Cornwall Lewis, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was obliged to throw aside the prudent measures of his predecessor and contract a loan of £16,000,000.

Meanwhile the Committee of Inquiry had continued its sittings; the Commissioners, Colonel Tulloch and Sir John McNeill, had been preparing their report upon the commissariat, while General Simpson had been examining into the conduct of the headquarter staff. The inquiry, which was very exhaustive, proved the truth at all events of the facts alleged by the correspondents of the papers. The sufferings of the army and the frequent confusion of the administration could no longer be questioned. But chiefly through the moderation of Lord Seymour, afterwards Duke of Somerset, the Commissioners did not commit themselves in their report to any personal charges. They traced the suffering to the circumstances under which the expedition had been undertaken, to the ignorance of the administration as to the amount of the enemy's forces in the Crimea and as to the strength of the fortress to be attacked; and to the consequent error by which they were led to expect the immediate success of the expedition, and to make no provision for a winter campaign. It is now nearly certain that the expectation was not ill-grounded, and that the disasters are to be attributed rather to faults of strategy on the part of the generals than to any erroneous conception on the part of the Ministers. As to the administrative officers, General Simpson felt bound in honour to declare that he found them thoroughly capable and energetic men, and in his position of Chief of the Staff he took care not to interfere with them. "There is not one of them," he writes, "whom I would

Result of the
Committee of
Inquiry.

wish to see removed ; I do not think a better selection of staff officers could have been made." The report of the Commissariat Commissioners took a somewhat different course. It contained certain strictures upon General Airey, upon the commanders of the cavalry, and upon Mr. Filder, the Commissary-General. Those officers demanded a formal inquiry, which was granted them, and, after a minute and careful examination, the Board, which sat in Chelsea Hospital, came to the conclusion that they were not to be blamed, but that the evils complained of were to be traced to the action of the Treasury.

The same sort of result was arrived at from the inquiries into the Hospitals. As early as November 1854 English lady nurses had gone out to devote themselves to the care of the wounded, and Miss Nightingale, enjoying the full confidence of Mr. Sidney Herbert, the Secretary at War, had been appointed to their superintendence. Under her the very defective arrangements for nursing had been rapidly improved. The doctors who, while devoting themselves with exemplary fidelity to the performance of their regular duties, had disregarded the administrative portion of hospital management, fell into the system which she suggested, and the hospitals, as early as December, appear to have been well organised. But the most extraordinary difficulties lay in the way of giving due effect to the management. As far as the Government or military administration was concerned, every possible neglect seems to have occurred—not wilfully, but merely because of the hampering effects of old routine. Not only were the requisite supplies, the most necessary medicines and clothing, wanting, but the officers appear to have been quite ignorant as to the sanitary requisites of an hospital. The rate of mortality therefore, in spite of Miss Nightingale's efforts, continued fearfully high. The new Ministry is to be credited with the appointment of Sanitary Commissioners with powers to act immediately, who so thoroughly did their work that when they were able, on the 17th of March, to set their arrangements in motion, the death-rate fell within a fortnight from 31 to 14 per cent., and by the close of June it had reached the normal rate of our military hospitals at home, namely 2 per cent. Again it was the administration and not the officers who were at fault.

Meanwhile the war went on. Wherever the blame should fall, at bottom the winter disasters had been caused by the unprepared condition in which England was habitually kept, and the necessity that some time should elapse before the resources of the country

could be efficiently employed. As a matter of course therefore, as the war lengthened the condition of the army improved. As the spring advanced the complaints ceased. Supplies were abundant, materials for carrying on the siege lavishly provided, and the employment of private enterprise in the building of the railway at Balaklava enabled the army to obtain without difficulty what the Government so freely bestowed. But although well supplied, the number of our troops was not largely increased ; and as reinforcements poured in for the French army, and as the Sardinians had in May joined the Alliance and sent troops to the Crimea, the English operations were somewhat restricted. The defence of the plateau was given up to our allies, and with it went what proved to be the most important of the offensive work, the attack upon the Malakoff Tower on the eastern side of the suburb. The secondary position which circumstances were thus forcing upon England on the land had not been compensated, as the nation had expected, by any marked success upon the sea. The great fleet sent out under Sir Charles Napier with such a flush of hope had returned, after taking Bomarsund, unable to accomplish anything against the great fortresses of Cronstadt and Sweaborg in the Baltic. Nor did the fleet under Dundas in the following year prove more successful. It was compelled to restrict its operations to a useless bombardment of Sweaborg. Even in the Black Sea, where the energetic Admiral Lyons was now in command, the capture of fortresses and stores upon the Sea of Azov (May 27), useful as inflicting some injury upon the enemy and throwing difficulties in their way, but without much importance on the general issue of the war, was all that our fleet could effect.

Time, which their want of preparation and dilatory tactics had rendered necessary for the Allies, had proved at least as useful to their opponents. Their great naval fortresses had become practically impregnable, and the indefatigable genius and resources of Todleben had so improved the defences of Sebastopol that its capture was a more difficult task now for the Allies, strengthened and well-prepared as they were, than it would have been when they first approached it ; while the siege was now watched by an enemy which had been raised by reinforcements to 200,000 men. Todleben's defence had assumed an active character, and as the regular parallels and trenches of the Allies drew nearer to the town, frequent combats took place to secure the advanced works which had been thrown out. A hillock known as the Mamelon, in front of the eastern defences, had been occupied by the Russians

Reform of
the Army
Hospitals.

Improved
condition of
the army.

The Russian
position
strengthened.

Rifle-pits had been dug, from which the trenches were commanded, and opposite the English attack some quarries had been occupied.

On the 17th of March the rifle-pits were captured by the French; a few days later a powerful sortie of the garrison was repulsed. On the 19th of April a general bombardment of the town again began, but without definite result. Shortly after this General Canrobert, too anxious-minded to be a very successful commander-in-chief, resigned his position, and was succeeded by General Pélisier, a man of firmer character. The attack now assumed a more active form. On the 17th of June, while the French army captured the Mamelon, and what was known as the White works, the English gained possession of the quarries. The road being thus cleared for a general assault, after a renewed bombardment on the 18th the assault was made. The concerted plan was ruined by an unfortunate error of one of the French generals, who mistook a signal, and for the first time the Russians could fairly boast of a complete success. Both English and French attacks were repelled. Very

Death of
Lord Raglan.
June 28.

shortly after this, his first military failure, Lord Raglan died. Exposed as he had been to the constant assaults of the Opposition, and loaded with charges of inefficiency which were proved to be false, he had shown himself able in the field, and had struggled manfully against disasters for which he was not responsible. It may however well be doubted whether his long training in official life and his extremely conciliatory character had not somewhat deprived him of the ready power of facing unexpected difficulties, and induced him to forego too readily the dictates of his own better judgment for the sake of maintaining the appearance of unanimity among the Allies. He was succeeded in command by General Simpson, a man of much less ability, of advanced age and failing health.

After the failure of the late assault the siege-works had been continued, and were gradually approaching nearer and nearer to the city. A renewed assault appeared imminent; and as in November, so now on the 16th of August, the covering army of the Russians made a desperate attempt to avert it. Coming down from the Mackenzie heights at the east end of the harbour, they pushed into the valley of the Tchernaya, a movement which was to be followed by a general assault upon the plateau both from the valley and from the city itself. The French and Sardinians, without the assistance of the English, succeeded, after several hours of severe fighting, in repelling the assault in the valley, and thus preventing the execution of the further parts of the plan which depended

Battle of the
Tchernaya.
Aug. 16.

on its success. The siege therefore continued without interruption; and in three weeks after this battle the French lines had approached so close to the Malakoff, which was regarded as the key to the defences, and the daily loss in the trenches was so heavy, that it became necessary either to assault or to withdraw. On the 8th of September, at midday, when the Russians generally retired for shelter and rest, a great assault was made upon the works in front of the lines. The broken character of the ground made the attack upon each work a separate engagement. The capture of either the Malakoff or the Redan must in all probability prove fatal to the defence; it was against them therefore that the chief efforts of the Allies were directed.

The attack upon the Malakoff fell naturally to the French, and as its guns covered the Redan, the English assault upon that work was not to take place till the French flag was seen on the Malakoff. An imposing body of troops nearly 30,000 strong was organised for the French assault. The fortress was carried at the first rush, and though again and again the Russians advanced to reconquer it and met with some successes, it remained in the hands of the French. According to the plan arranged, no sooner was the tricolour hoisted than the English pushed forward against the Redan. The Redan was a work in the form of an obtuse angle, and requiring many men for its assault; but according to General Simpson's own despatch, the assaulting column consisted of only 1000 men, and instead of attacks directed upon all sides of the work, the salient angle alone was

Capture of the
Malakoff.
Sep. 8.

assaulted. In spite of the fire to which they were subjected, the troops forced their way over ditch and rampart, but then found themselves faced by an inner rampart erected across the angle, to the fire of which they were fully exposed. They were unable to advance from their cramped position, and although from the number of killed and wounded it would appear that troops were sent to their assistance, the general's own despatch makes no mention of it. At all events the result was that they were compelled to relax their hold upon the work, and to retreat in disorder to the trenches.

Failure of the
attack on
the Redan.

An urgent request was sent by Marshal Pélisier, who was with difficulty holding his own in the Malakoff, that the assault should be renewed. But, as General Simpson states, the trenches were so crowded with troops that he was unable to organise a second assault before the following morning. Beyond the loss of reputation which it entailed, and the heavy list of killed and wounded, the failure of this ill-arranged movement was of no great moment. So truly was

the Malakoff the key of the position, that its possession by the French practically closed the siege. The Russian general, after destroying as much as he could of the city, withdrew to the northern side of the harbour, and the town itself, with the fleet and dockyard, remained in the hands of the Allies. In its gradual growth the siege had become one of gigantic proportions. The Russians had more than 800 guns mounted, and the besieging army about 700. The approaches, in many places cut through the rock, were upwards of fifty miles in length.

Though the fall of Sebastopol had taken place under circumstances which deprived it of that decisive effect which would have followed the capture of the town immediately after the battle of Alma, it brought the war to a conclusion. The Russians had indeed exhibited unexpected powers of resistance, their army still unbroken kept the field, and a certain success, even after the fall of Sebastopol, attended their arms in Asia. For the fortress of Kars, near Erzeroom, had, after a lengthened defence, conducted with conspicuous courage and ability by three Englishmen, General Williams, Dr. Sandwith, and Colonel Leake, been compelled to surrender to the Russian General, Moravieff.

But the losses of the Russian troops in the Crimea, both in men and material, had been enormous, and the state of his resources was such as to induce the Czar to desire negotiations for peace, into which he could still enter as an unbroken though defeated Power. The Emperor of the French was satisfied with the military glory he had acquired, and with the favourable comparison which had been somewhat unduly drawn between his army and that of England; he was at the same time much distressed by what he himself knew, but which he had kept secret from the world, of the losses his army had sustained in the Crimea. He was as usual eager chiefly for the security of his own position, now rendered more important to him by his late marriage and the hope of an heir. He was willing to secure the friendship of Russia by ceasing to press the advantages he had gained. At the same time Austria was anxious as ever to play its double part—to spare the Czar and to thwart any increase of the influence of the Western Powers if its own interest with regard to Turkey could be secured. It was Austria, therefore, which in September renewed the negotiations broken off in June, and formulated a new ultimatum which was accepted by Russia as a basis of peace. The danger which Lord Palmerston had foreseen had come upon England. There was much risk of being

Fall of
Sebastopol,
Sep. 8.

Surrender of
Kars.
Nov. 28.

Desire for
peace on the
part of Russia,
France, and
Austria.

compelled to accept an insufficient peace, which would leave unsettled the real object of the war—a substantial check to the encroaching ambition of Russia. It was only by great firmness on the part of our plenipotentiary, Lord Clarendon, and the strong support he obtained from Lord Palmerston at home, that the negotiations were brought to a satisfactory conclusion. At one time it seemed by no means improbable that England would find itself obliged to continue the war single-handed in alliance with Turkey. Lord Palmerston declared himself ready, if necessary, to pursue this course. Indeed the condition of England was so satisfactory as to render this no vain boast on his part. The fleet and army were in thoroughly good condition, the revenue had within a little proved sufficient to cover even the war expenditure of the last year, and the credit of the country was so good that when a loan of several millions was wanted, no less than £38,000,000 was offered to the Treasury beyond the necessary amount, which was readily advanced on sound terms by the great house of Rothschild.

Fortunately, however, the necessity did not arise, and a peace of a tolerably satisfactory character was concluded on the 30th of March 1856. The difficulty of securing the Black Sea from the preponderance of Russia without exerting a coercion upon that Power, which, even after the loss of Sebastopol, it could scarcely be expected to bear, had wrecked former negotiations. The difficulty was now solved by the declaration of the neutrality of the Black Sea, to which all mercantile marines were to be freely admitted, but from which the ships of war of all nations, even of those occupying its shores, were to be excluded. As this removed the necessity for warlike preparation, Russia and Turkey eventually consented to abstain from the establishment of any military maritime arsenal within the Bosphorus. A certain number of comparatively small ships of war for the ordinary business of the coast, agreed upon in a convention between the Czar and the Sultan, were excepted from this rule. In other respects the treaty incorporated the points which had been already formulated at the Vienna Conference, including the admission of Turkey to the advantages of public law and European Concert; the reference to the joint decision of all the signatory Powers of any dispute arising between the Porte and any one of them; the maintenance of the firman spontaneously issued by the Sultan securing advantages to the Christian population; the opening of the navigation of the Danube under charge of a commission; the restoration of all conquests during the war; the demarcation of the

Terms of the
peace.
Mar. 30, 1856.

frontier of Bessarabia and of the Asiatic territories of the Porte; and the maintenance of the Danubian Principalities in their present state of independence under the suzerainty of Turkey. The opportunity of a European settlement was taken to secure a general concurrence in certain ameliorations in the laws of maritime war. England consented to yield all the points which had more than once seemed on the verge of bringing her into collision with the maritime Powers of Europe. The neutral flag was henceforward to cover all goods, with the exception of contraband of war. Neutral goods, with the same exception, were to be free from capture, even under a hostile flag, and blockades to be binding were to be effective. In exchange for these great concessions, which appeared to rob her of her most efficient weapons in war-time, she obtained the abolition of privateering. America alone held aloof from the arrangement, alleging as the ground for refusal that the European Powers declined to exempt private property from capture. The powers of offence which England had been able to use when mistress of the sea she thus surrendered in exchange for immunities from that danger to which her world-wide commerce was inevitably exposed. The firmness of Lord Palmerston, which had overcome the supineness of France during the negotiations for peace, was again successfully asserted in insisting upon the complete execution of the articles. Russia attempted to occupy the Isle of Serpents at the mouth of the Danube, and raised a question with regard to the new Bessarabian frontier, which, taking advantage of some ambiguity in the maps of the district, the Russians tried to draw considerably to the south of that intended by the negotiations. Again, in spite of the lukewarm support of the French, Lord Palmerston had his way.

An indirect effect of the war was nearly involving England in a serious quarrel with the United States. Some irritation already existed between the two countries as to the affairs of Central America, where the claims of England to the protectorate of the Mosquito Indians, and the establishment of a colony consisting of certain islands in the Bay of Honduras, were regarded as infringements of a treaty known as the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, contracted with America in 1850. The difficulty was ultimately solved by an agreement, in accordance with which the English withdrew their claims in exchange for the payment of a compensation to the Mosquitoes, and a pledge on the part of Honduras to preserve the rights and property of the English settled in the islands. But while this question was still in abeyance, the public mind was considerably shocked by the summary dismissal of certain of our consuls

*Difficulties with
America.
June 1856.*

and Mr. Crampton, our Minister at Washington; and blame was somewhat freely thrown on Lord Palmerston's Government for not replying to the apparent insult by the dismissal of Mr. Dallas, the American Minister. The grounds on which the American Government acted were that in attempting to obtain recruits for the war in the East the English agents had transgressed the Municipal Law of the States, and that the ambassador had been cognisant of these illegal acts. A recruiting office had been publicly established in the English territory at Halifax, and of this it was impossible to complain. But it was alleged that English agents had gone into the States, and there persuaded men to come to Halifax to enlist. The English Government, conscious that there had been no intention to act illegally, and apparently satisfied upon inquiry that infringements of the law had actually taken place, tendered an apology to the President's Government, and put an end to the enlistment. The dispute, however, formed the groundwork of a motion of censure in the House of Commons. An attempt was made on the one side to implicate Government in wilful co-operation with its agents, and on the other to bring home to it a charge of mean-spirited submission to American insults. Lord Palmerston's explanation and denunciation of the irrational and double-sided charge was triumphantly successful. An immense majority asserted the continued confidence felt in his administration (July 1).

The close of the war afforded a fair opportunity to the Chancellor of the Exchequer (May 19) to make an estimate of its Cost of the Crimean war. cost, while explaining the necessity during the existing year of continuing the war expenditure. As far as receipts and expenditure went, he calculated upon a deficiency of nearly £7,000,000, and this he purposed to raise by way of loan. He then explained that in the years between 1854 and 1856, including a million lent by treaty to Sardinia when that country joined the Alliance against the Russians, the expenditure had amounted to £155,121,307. In the two preceding peaceful years it had been £102,032,596, leaving as the excess of expenditure during the two war years £53,088,711. If to this were added the difference between the expenditure of the present year and that of the preceding years of peace, namely £24,500,000, the total excess-expenditure of the three years would amount to £77,588,000, and this might be regarded as the expense of the war. Of this sum, during the year 1855 £17,182,522 had been raised by increased taxes, £33,604,263 had been added to the funded and unfunded debt. The £7,000,000 to be borrowed for the current year,

added to the £33,000,000 already borrowed, would show the addition to the public debt. Yet in spite of this the position of the country with regard to debt was not unfavourable. Since the end of the great war, notwithstanding the lately incurred addition, there was a decrease of nearly £50,000,000 on the funded, and of £17,000,000 on the unfunded debt, while the total diminution on the interest of the funded and unfunded debt since the close of the last war was more than £5,400,000.

The interest felt in the war and in its conclusion was so absorbing that very little was done in Parliament in the way of domestic or social legislation. Indeed though a variety of topics which were filling the minds of reformers, and were ultimately to rise to the surface as subjects of the first importance, were brought in and discussed, they produced no fruitful legislation. Thus, resolutions for the improvement of national education, introduced by Lord John Russell, a motion for the introduction of competitive examination in the civil service, and observations as to the necessity of improved military education, all passed away without result. A fruitless attempt was also made by Government (Feb. 1856) to introduce a system of life peerages. This was a revival of an obsolete right of the Crown, which had not been exercised since the reign of Richard II. By this new form of patent Judge Parke was raised to the Upper House for life under the title of Lord Wensleydale. The reason given for the innovation was the necessity of strengthening the body of lawyers in the Upper House, which was a final Court of Appeal. Parke was well chosen for the experiment; an excellent and dignified judge, he had no male heir. The limited nature of his peerage was therefore of no moment to him, nor after his death would the number of peers have been increased. His creation however was regarded with the gravest suspicion, not only by the Lords but by many other men of conservative principles. For it seemed to establish a precedent which would render it easy for a Minister to do what hitherto had been a matter of the gravest difficulty, to create a majority in his favour in the Upper House. At the same time it was thought that the dignity of the peerage would suffer much by the introduction of this secondary class of peers. The opposition was too strong to be overcome by Government, the point was yielded, and Lord Wensleydale was made an hereditary peer. In spite of this rebuff Lord Palmerston's firmness was successful in the following year in passing, against the strongest opposition, a Divorce Bill, relaxing some of the great difficulties which had hitherto pre-

Domestic
legislation of
1856-57.

vented all but the wealthiest people from obtaining relief in the case of unhappy married life.

Though the Government, occupied as it was with grave difficulties abroad, did little or nothing for the advance of political reform, the active growth of the nation during these years in its more social aspects was marked. The Premier was at all events in earnest in that common-sense sort of reform which consists in the improvement of the material condition of the people; while Prince Albert devoted much of his great ability to fostering the advance of culture. The condition of the housing of the poor in our large cities was attracting attention; science was beginning to point out that not only was much of the prevalent disease a preventable evil, but that the same causes which produced physical disease produced moral degradation. Dr. Letheby had been intrusted with the duty of examining and reporting upon the condition of the poor in the East of London, and his disclosures had brought to light a terrible state of things. To remedy such practical evils as these Lord Palmerston was always ready to give his best attention, and it is but just to regard him as one of the earliest workers in that field of sanitary reform which has of late years so extended, but in which, so far at least as concerns the housing of the poor, much still remains to be done. The chief measures which by his energy were taken were the enforced registration of common lodging-houses, and the appointment of medical officers to supervise and control them. The influence of Prince Albert was of a different character. While Lord Palmerston was aiming at straightforward and immediate physical improvement, and setting on foot plans of local and municipal supervision which have yet to ripen, the Prince, a man of finer and more ideal views, was aiming at improvement by those more indirect methods which are summed up in the word "culture." Education, art, music, all that adorns and softens life, were in his view the best methods for the education of the national character. He was in no sense visionary or unpractical; model farms and model cottages engaged his attention. But the movement which he had set on foot in 1851 had continued to be paramount in his mind—the improvement of taste and the cultivation of the more artistic side of the British workman,—and to his influence, direct or indirect, may be traced the establishment of the South Kensington Museum as a centre of art-training, the vast musical festival in honour of Handel held in the Exhibition building of 1851, now removed to Sydenham, and the exhibition of art treasures opened at Manchester in May 1857.

Progress in
sanitary
reforms and in
culture.

The explanation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the necessity of regarding the expenditure of the current year as one of war proved to be only too well justified. For during the recess England found herself with two small wars upon her hands. On the 1st of November the Governor-General of India issued a declaration of war against Persia. On the 27th of October a British fleet under Sir Michael Seymour proceeded to an armed attack upon Canton.

As was not unusual at that time with regard to matters in Asia, the Persian war attracted but little attention. Yet the Ministry themselves were not blind to its importance. "We are beginning," wrote Lord Palmerston, "to repel the first opening of trenches against India by Russia." It was with this view that he was determined to bring the questions at issue with Persia to a very definite conclusion. For some time hostility to the English had been visible at the Persian Court, and had culminated at the close of the last year in the withdrawal from Teheran of Mr. Murray, the English representative. But this squabble went hand in hand with a far more important matter, the siege and capture of Herat. By an agreement concluded in 1853 between the Persian Government and Colonel Shiel, the British Minister, the Persian Shah undertook not to attack this important post unless it were invaded by a foreign army, which meant an army from the East, and in that case the Shah agreed to withdraw his troops as soon as the foreigner should retire. The ruler of Herat at the end of the year 1855 was Syad Mahomed. A rebellion broke out, and Yusuf Khan, a member of the old royal family, was seated on the throne of Herat. At the same time Dost Mahomed, the Afghan ruler of Cabul, conquered Candahar. The Persian Shah, pretending that this was a preliminary step to the acquisition of Herat, chose to consider that the condition of the convention of 1853 had been fulfilled, and sent troops and captured the city. Its fall was immediately followed by the declaration of war from India (November 1, 1856). In his proclamation the Governor-General explained the condition of the treaties, declared that the assertion that Dost Mahomed had been instigated to advance by the British Government was false, that there was no proof that any advance upon Herat was intended, and as friendly remonstrances had failed, it became incumbent upon England to convince the Persian Shah that solemn engagements could not be violated with impunity. A force from Bombay and a fleet were at once despatched to the Persian Gulf, and the town of Bushire captured (December 10). No

The Persian War.

great anxiety was felt as to the success of British arms, but it was known that the situation was unhealthy, and that advance towards the interior lay across formidable mountain ridges and might be attended with serious difficulty. The first expedition was followed up by strong reinforcements under Sir James Outram, having General Havelock as his second in command. He could dispose of about 5000 troops. With these, and with the assistance of the ships, he succeeded in entirely defeating the forces opposed to him, and in capturing the strongly fortified position of Mohamera, near the mouth of the Euphrates, and the city of Ahwaz, further inland. Further advance became unnecessary. On the 4th of March 1857 a peace was signed in Paris by which the Shah engaged to withdraw his troops from Herat, to relinquish all claim to the sovereignty of that city, or to any part of Afghanistan, and to abstain from all interference with the independence of either of those States. If differences arose they were to be referred to the friendly offices of the British Government, and till those friendly offices failed, no recourse was to be had to arms.

The attack on Canton was the outcome of a dispute with regard to the action of the Chinese authorities in seizing a The Chinese War. Lorch or coasting schooner called the *Arrow*. By the existing treaties a strict system of extradition was established between the Chinese and the English, whether residing at Hong Kong or in their ships. The criminals of either race were to be diligently sought for and returned to their own authorities. Also all British trading vessels were to have a register in Chinese and English under the seal of the chief superintendent of trade. In 1855 the local government of Hong Kong had passed an ordinance authorising the grant of such registers for a year to vessels owned by British subjects, whether they conformed to the other requirements of the English law or not. In the case of the *Arrow*, even this relaxation had been relaxed; the proprietor of the *Arrow* was a Chinese resident in Hong Kong, but not a naturalised British subject. In September 1855 it had received a colonial register and sailed under the British flag, but that register lapsed in September 1856. Here was therefore a vessel, Chinese built, Chinese owned, Chinese manned, with the exception of the master, and without a British register, but sailing under the British flag. The authorities in Canton believed that one of the crew was a pirate; a war boat came off as she lay in the Canton river and siezed the whole crew. Mr. Parkes, the British Consul, demanded that the crew should be brought to the consulate under

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the extradition treaty, and wrote to Sir John Bowring, the British Plenipotentiary at Hong Kong, narrating the circumstances. In reply Sir J. Bowring acknowledged that the *Arrow* had no right to hoist the British flag, but said that as the Chinese had no knowledge of the expiration of the licence, they had violated the treaty by refusing to give up the prisoners. The Commissioner Yeh, the governor at Canton, refusing to make any reparation, Sir John Bowring summoned Sir Michael Seymour with the British fleet. On the 23d of October he took forts on the river, including one called the Dutch folly, on an island opposite the city. Upon this Yeh surrendered the men, but demanded that two of them, charged with piracy, should be given back to the Chinese authorities. But Mr. Parkes had demanded a public restitution and apology; as this was not sent, he refused to recognise the restoration of the men without it as an act of reparation, sent them back to the Chinese, and raised a new demand. By the treaty of Nankin in 1842, and subsequently, stipulations had been made for the free entrance of the English to Canton. These stipulations had been evaded, and had not been pressed. Sir John Bowring thought this a good opportunity for bringing them up, and thus shifting the ground of the quarrel. Throughout November attacks upon the river and the Chinese vessels were carried on. The Bogue forts and those opposite to them, mounting 600 guns, were captured. As was to be expected, reprisals were made; the Chinese burnt down the foreign factories, and towards the end of the year there was a cruel massacre of the European crew of a vessel called the *Thistle*; and while Seymour was waiting for reinforcements a violent proclamation was issued by Yeh in which a price was offered for the heads of "the English and French dogs;" for the French, too, had claims which they had taken the opportunity of urging. In the spring of 1857 hostilities were renewed, and many junks were destroyed. The English were nearly everywhere successful without difficulty, but were driven back by the strong works raised by the Chinese in the Fatshan branch of the river. It became necessary to despatch troops from England, and Lord Elgin, a man of greater authority than Sir John Bowring, was sent out, with Ashburnham to command the troops. Affairs in India looked so gloomy that the expedition was diverted to Calcutta. It was not till October that Lord Elgin was in a position to enter upon negotiations as plenipotentiary.

It is not to be supposed that such questionable proceedings as these would pass without notice in England. There was a strong feel-

ing among the more advanced Liberals that Lord Palmerston was here playing that part which they so often erroneously attributed to him, and bullying a weak country. Mr. Cobden made himself the spokesman of this party, and moved a resolution in the House to the effect that the papers laid on the table failed to establish satisfactory grounds for the violent measures resorted to. A long and able discussion followed, and besides many of the Liberals, with Lord John Russell at their head, Gladstone and the Peelites, Disraeli and the Conservatives, combined in supporting the resolution. It became evident that if it was carried it would be a vote of want of confidence in the Ministry. As such Lord Palmerston regarded it. But he did not believe that the verdict of the House, construed in this broad manner, was the verdict of the people; and when upon a division the Government appeared in a minority of 16 (March 3), instead of resigning he dissolved Parliament and appealed to the Constituencies. The question placed before them was really a personal one;—had they, or had they not, confidence in the Prime Minister. The answer was for the time conclusive. The Crimean war had roused the aggressive feelings of the nation. The man who, in the midst of its disasters, had taken upon himself the duty of carrying it to a successful conclusion, whose firmness had secured a peace at that time considered honourable, and whose administration had since been crowned with success in Persia, was a general favourite. In all directions his party was successful. Several of the leading Peelites lost their seats, Bright, Milner Gibson, and Cobden, were all defeated. It was with a triumphant majority that Lord Palmerston met the new Parliament on the 30th of April.

Meanwhile the war in China went on. The first effort at negotiation failed. Yeh's answers were all of an evasive character. Late in December Canton was bombarded and the walls occupied. At the beginning of January 1858 the town itself was entered, and Yeh captured and sent off to Calcutta. The demands of the English and French Commissioners were forwarded to the Court of Peking, and when no answer was received, the Commissioners went with the fleets to the Pihou river to insist upon a reply. The forts which covered the river were taken or destroyed, and the fleets pushed up as far as Tientsin. Then in June, after some delay, negotiations were resumed, and brought to a successful conclusion by a treaty securing the permanent establishment of a British Minister at Peking, the opening of more ports, the

Debates on
the Chinese
War.

Palmerston
appeals to the
Country suc-
cessfully.
March 1857.

Peace with
China.
June 1858.

establishment of Consuls, and the clear definition of the rights, in judicial matters, to be exercised by the respective countries over their subjects.

While the tidings from the seat of war in the East continued to be in the highest degree satisfactory, they began to be mingled with rumours of disaffection in the Indian army; and the triumphs of the British troops in Persia, and the less glorious successes in China, passed out of public sight, hidden by the terrible scenes of the Indian Mutiny.

The English Empire in India is practically a military occupation. The resources of England alone in men and money have never proved sufficient to carry it out; from the time of Clive, when the English trading company began to acquire dominions in India, it has been found necessary to have recourse to native assistance to supply troops. Every addition to the constantly growing territory in English possession, or under English influence, necessitated a corresponding increase in the native army, till in 1857 the extraordinary spectacle was presented of a vast alien country kept in subjection by a mercenary army of nearly 300,000 of its own inhabitants. The principles of cohesion which held this mass together, and kept it under discipline, could have been no other than the advantage of their pay, the *esprit de corps* engendered by successes in the field, the personal influence of the European officers who organised and commanded them, and a fidelity of very great but unknown strength to their salt, as it was called—that is, to those whose bread they had eaten. When it is remembered that the Sepoy brought with him to the camp his civil life, his family, his religious rites, and his caste, and that he was thus alive to every movement, social or religious, which was disturbing the rest of the population of India, it is plain that an army thus constituted must have been an instrument requiring most judicious handling. Since the time when it was first constituted, the Indian army had been considerably changed, and in some respects for the worse. It had become more Europeanised. The possibility of rising to high military rank had been taken from the natives. No coloured man was allowed under any circumstances to command Europeans. The most ignorant lad

Changes in the native army.

who joined the regiment was at once superior to every native officer, however great his worth and experience. The large number of European officers in each regiment, which had been increased in accordance with the custom obtaining in the army at home, tended, by supplying the Europeans with a society

of their own, to separate them from that close intercourse with their men which had at first been one great source of their strength. Improved means of communication with England, and the large introduction of English society, had acted still more in the same direction. The same cause had taught the English officer but too frequently to regard his Indian service as temporary, and to look forward to closing his life upon his pension in England. It had thus happened that even the free use of the native languages had become a somewhat rare accomplishment. At the same time the large increase of the English dominions, and the consequent demand for efficient agents, had introduced the custom of employing as civil or political officers military men. It was naturally to the abler among them that these appointments fell, and thus the standard of those who remained with their regiments tended to be lowered. It appears certain that, although the officers had an almost blind love for the regiments to which they belonged, and implicit confidence in their men, the close tie between European and native in the army had been much loosened, the intimate acquaintance of the officers with the wants and feelings of their men had in a large degree disappeared, and room had thus been afforded for the growth of deep-seated discontent wholly unknown to the officers.

The process of change had not gone on without repeated indications of the danger it was causing. Mutiny after mutiny, though partial and speedily suppressed, had broken out in different parts of India. Of these the apparent causes had been various, but always illustrated the strange credulity of the Sepoy, and the extreme sensitiveness of his feelings when either his religious prejudices or the advantages derived from his service were assaulted. Thus in the case of the two most dangerous demonstrations of disaffection, the Vellore mutiny in 1806, and the refusal of the Sepoy troops to serve in Sindh in 1843, the first was caused largely by religious panic. The defiling leather stock, the round hat, and the belt which formed a cross upon the Sepoy's breast, were regarded as so many insidious attempts to break down the caste and religion of Hindoo and Mahomedan. It was even believed that for the same purpose the blood of hogs and kine had been mingled with the salt they were called upon to use. On the second occasion it was the demand made upon the native regiments to occupy the newly annexed country, without the additional payment which had hitherto attended service beyond the Indus, which aroused the spirit of rebellion. While on a third occasion, at Barrackpore, in 1824, it was

Warnings given by former mutinies.

the dread of being required to serve in Burmah, which the Bengal Sepoy regarded as beyond the service for which he had contracted, and which implied either much privation on the voyage or loss of caste, which drove the 47th to an outbreak, suppressed only by the fire of European artillery and the breaking up of the regiment. Again, the Sepoy was not only a soldier but a member of a nation, and liable to be influenced by the social and political feelings of those around him. And the native army being recognised as the instrument by which English supremacy was upheld, it was the natural desire of all those who for any cause wished ill to that empire to undermine the fidelity of the army, to turn if possible against them the instrument the English had themselves created. Astute men were always ready, therefore, to play upon the credulous and sensitive character of the native soldier, and disaffection in the army rose or fell according as the sway of political events roused the enemies of England to hopeful activity, or condemned them for the time to passive submission. Thus the intrigues of the sons of Tippoo may be regarded as the exciting cause of the mutiny of 1806; the disasters in Cabul encouraged the mutineers of 1843; the final destruction of the Sikh power at the battle of Goojerat for a time set discontent at rest.

But the conduct pursued by the Government of late years had tended to increase largely those classes who disliked the English rule. The administration of Lord Dalhousie from 1848 to 1856 was one of unusual brilliancy. The second Sikh war had been brought to a triumphant conclusion; at the other side of India Pegu had been conquered; and the territory under the direct rule of the English Government had been largely increased. But these apparently brilliant results had been purchased by the pursuit of a policy which was not adapted to conciliate the friendship of the natives. Keenly alive to the advantages of direct English rule, as contrasted with the administration of native princes, Lord Dalhousie lost no opportunity of asserting to its full the paramount power which the English claimed. Whenever a princely family became extinct he regarded its dominions as having lapsed, and took possession of them; and in defiance of Indian custom disregarded the process of adoption by which those families had been perpetuated. As it happened it was the Mahrattas, the last of the great conquering Hindoo people, who suffered chiefly by this policy. No less than four great divisions of their empire underwent the process of annexation. In 1849 the possessions of the Rajah of Sattarah, the nominal head of the whole confederation, were appro-

The Mahrattas alienated by Dalhousie's policy.

priated upon the death of the chief. Under similar circumstances, in 1853, Nagpore, the dominion of the Bonslar, passed under English rule; and the same fate befell the smaller State of Jhansee, in spite of the strenuous opposition of the widow of the late Rajah, and her assertion, which was true, of the unbroken fidelity of her house. The case of the Peishwa was a little different, for the last holder of that title had already withdrawn from his dominions and lived as an English pensioner at Bithoor. But on his death Lord Dalhousie refused to recognise Nana Sahib, his adopted son, as his political heir, and thus deprived him of his title, and the advantages which accrued to him from it. The history of the mutiny tells only too plainly, in the massacres of Cawnpore and Jhansee, the hostility thus excited in the minds of the Mahrattas.

There were two other annexations which, in different ways, exercised an even more important influence upon the coming struggle. These were the annexation of Oude and of the Punjab. If the appropriation of the Mahratta principalities touched the feelings of the Hindoos, it was the Mohamedans who were irritated by the annexation of Oude. The wretched government and profligate extravagance of the Oude Court had early attracted the attention of the Government of Calcutta; and Lord Wellesley at the beginning of the century, not only in the interests of good government, but also with a view to utilise Oude as a bulwark to the English power, had obliged the Nabob to disband his disorderly native troops, and to take into his pay a certain amount of British soldiers, surrendering districts yielding a large revenue in order to secure punctual payment of the subsidy. At the same time Lord Wellesley did not apparently believe in the lengthened duration of this sort of double government. He thought that no effective security could be provided until both the civil and military management of the Government was transferred to the Company. But Lord Wellesley's successors had held their hand. The sovereign of Oude, whatever the faults of his administration, had proved faithful, and had even been raised to the dignity of king. Meanwhile the civil government had become simply monstrous. Attempts were made to bring the king to reason; they all proved vain, and in the opinion not only of such Governor-Generals as Bentinck and Lord Hardinge, but of men so averse to any general system of annexation as Sir Henry Lawrence, Low, Outram, and Sleeman, it appeared an absolute duty laid upon the English Government to step in and put an end to the miserable condition of the country. It is to be observed, however, that these officers all recom-

The Annexation of Oude not well carried out.

mended that the revenue should be applied wholly to the uses of the country. Postponed for a while by the difficulties in the Punjab, the question of annexation came up again in 1855, and with the consent of the Directors at home, Lord Dalhousie determined to incorporate the country with the English dominions, and to draw from it revenue as from any other part of India. Outram was intrusted with the carrying out of this sentence. The transfer of power was completed without difficulty and without objection on the part of the people, and Lord Dalhousie left India in the belief that he had brought to a successful conclusion his last and greatest measure. It is possible that had this great revolution been steadily carried out in a conciliatory spirit, this hopeful state of things might have continued. But unfortunately Outram was disabled by his health from completing the work. It fell into the hands of inferior men, who, full of the advantages of the English system, imposed it recklessly upon the people. By the action of the settlement officers the wealthy Talukdars found themselves stripped of half their property. The class who had depended upon the Court were naturally ruined. The military class no longer found scope for their energy. And even the peasants were distressed by the introduction of a revenue system, better it might be, but different to that which they knew and understood. Thus, while the mere act of annexation appeared to be a blow at the rights of all the princely families of India, all classes of the people became bitterly alienated from the new rule, and it was from Oude that a number (estimated at three-fifths) of the Bengal Sepoys were drawn.

It was not only in its larger political action that the English Government had been exciting discontent. The action which had so tended to alienate the people of Oude was only an instance of the approved and accepted policy of many of our best statesmen in India. In fact something resembling it had been the inevitable attendant upon every fresh increase of our empire. The destruction of the apparatus of native royalty had cut loose and thrown from their rank and employment those who had depended upon the Court. The rearrangement of the revenue upon the principles then accepted had as inevitably destroyed what may be spoken of as the native aristocracy. Starting with the idea that the native gentry were of necessity oppressors, the object of our statesmen was to protect the mass of the people. The means by which they sought to do this was to allow as little as possible to intervene between the Government and the people. But the Governments to which we succeeded had granted the collection of revenue to a class of men

Discontent
excited by the
rearrangement
of the revenue.

called Talukdars. To them had been given districts or estates, not as property, but saddled with a certain amount of revenue due to the Government, and with the right of keeping for themselves the rent of the estate after the Government claims had been paid. The property of the land lay with the Zemindars or with the village communities. The English system consisted in recognising only this proprietary right, and in dealing directly with the Zemindars without the intervention of the Talukdars or collectors. But in fact it was these Talukdars who, exercising a sort of manorial right over the land, were the landed gentry of the country. The English revenue system, as exemplified in the great settlement of the North-Western Provinces, which began in 1833, almost entirely swept away this class. To many of the wisest and most observant men in India it was evident that this system turned against us a great and influential body, without securing us the support of the peasant whom we wished to protect, but from whose mind the memory of old connections could not be obliterated. Still further in the same direction went the principle of resuming rent-free properties unless a title to them could be exhibited. As many of these properties had been acquired many years before by grants either of our predecessors or of ourselves in the early times of our occupation, and as the preservation of documents in the climate of India is no easy thing, the resumption was little else than a revolution in the tenure of land.

It is not difficult to see how, under such circumstances, the feeling of discontent, widely diffused among many classes of the country, might find an exponent in the native army, or how a mutiny in this army might speedily grow into a great national rebellion, and even a struggle between the black and white races. And this is in fact what took place in the beginning of the year 1857. It is almost impossible to lay the finger upon the original cause of the mutiny, to settle whether it was Mahomedan or Hindoo in its first shape, or whether it was a spontaneous movement of the Sepoys, or a part of the general movement of the discontented classes, the offspring of intrigues carried on by astute men using the childish character of the Sepoy as their instrument. The elements of danger were at all events present in profusion. An exiled and discontented king of Oude kept his Court in Calcutta. The claimant to the rank of Peishwa was nursing his wrongs at Bithoor. Even the effete representative of the old Mogul line had been looking with hope to the movements of the Persian Shah, and was dreaming of a new Mohomedan invasion. And Oude at all events was full of a

Effect on the
Army of
this general
discontent.

ruined class of landed magnates and of a disbanded soldiery, pining for the disorderly rule so summarily swept away. The point through which the Sepoy was to be reached was in this case his religion. The all-devouring character of the English Government, which spared neither prince nor gentleman nor custom nor prejudice, seemed to warrant the idea that caste and religion would be equally disregarded. It seemed not unreasonable to believe that a thorough recasting of all conditions of life, political or social, upon a model in some sort at all events English, was the ultimate object aimed at by the dominant nation. Full of suspicion, the Sepoy misconstrued everything under this false light. Troops were required to serve in Burmah, but the Brahmin might not cook upon "the black water;" to cross the sea condemned him to live during the voyage upon the parched grain he brought with him. Most of the regiments in the Bengal army were recruited only for service to which they could march, only a few for general purposes. It seemed so absurd a thing that a Government should not be able to command the services of its own army that Lord Canning, the Governor-General, himself introduced and carried in the Legislative Council a law prescribing for the future general enlistment. Here at once the high-caste Sepoy saw an attempt to place him on the same footing as everybody else, and to ruin his religious peculiarities. All sorts of foolish rumours of the same description were rife. But at length it seemed to the prejudiced and ignorant minds of the soldiers that the attempt was being made in good earnest. It had been decided to introduce into the Indian Army the Enfield Rifle in the place of the old Brown Bess. The ammunition for the new arm consisted of a cartridge containing both powder and ball, and greased that it might pass easily down the fluted barrel. The terrible idea was whispered, and once whispered flew abroad and fixed itself indelibly in the minds of the Sepoys, that the grease employed contained the fat of hogs and of cattle. The mere handling of such abominations was bad enough, but as the cartridge had to be torn open by the teeth, the subtle defilement seemed to pass into their very mouths. Here was an evident plan for at once wiping out the distinctions of religion, and fitting all, Mahomedan and Hindoo alike, to become Christians. A complete panic seems to have seized the army. It was in vain that the regiments were assured that, except in the factories, none of the new greased cartridges had passed into native hands, in vain that they were assured that the composition used was wholly free from the obnoxious substances, in vain that they

Panic of
suspicion
among
the Sepoys.

were allowed to grease their own ammunition. Half satisfied with regard to the grease itself, their anxiety turned upon the paper in which the cartridges were wrapped, and which happened to be of a glossy surface. Nor could the chemical analysis which proved its freedom from grease remove the deep-rooted belief from their minds.

The first overt signs of the deep impression which this panic fear was exercising upon the Sepoy's mind were shown at Barrackpore, the large cantonment in the neighbourhood of Calcutta. Brigadier Hearsey explained at length the truth with regard to the ammunition and the absurdity of the dread of violent conversion, and succeeded for a while in calming the nascent disorder. But before many weeks were over, at the station of Berampore, near Moorshedabad, on February 25th, the men of the 19th regiment refused to accept their cartridges, and broke into open mutiny. The extent and completeness of the organisation of which this was but a token, was certainly not yet fully appreciated by the Government or by Lord Canning. But the general fact that the mutiny threatened extreme danger could not but be present to his mind. For among other effects following upon the wide extension of the English dominion came the necessity of trusting the more settled parts of the Empire to native troops, while the somewhat scanty supply of Europeans was drawn towards the frontier. At this time, between Calcutta and Allahabad, a distance of about 600 miles, there were no English regiments except one at Dinapore. The summary punishment of a disaffected regiment by disarmament or disbandment could only be carried out in the presence of a considerable European force. Lord Canning therefore at once despatched a message to call back one of the English regiments from Burmah. Pending its arrival, some weeks of the gravest anxiety elapsed. There was every sign that the disaffection of the 19th regiment, now being slowly marched back towards Calcutta, was shared by many of the troops in the large cantonment of Barrackpore, about 16 miles from the capital. The alarm in Calcutta was great, nor was it allayed till the arrival of the regiment from Burmah. Then at once measures were taken for disarming the 19th. But before this punishment could be inflicted, a single fanatical Sepoy of the name of Mogul Pandi, of the 34th regiment, had broken out at Barrackpore, and in the presence of his regiment, and of a native officer who stood by without interfering, had assaulted and murdered Lieutenant Baugh. The execution of Mogul Pandi, and after some delay of the native officer, was carried out, and inquiries tended to show

Mutiny at
Berampore.
Feb. 26, 1857.

Murder of
Lieut. Baugh
at Barrackpore.
March 29.

that it would soon be necessary to get rid of the whole of the 34th regiment.

Meanwhile events in other parts of India assumed a very threatening character, and the gigantic dimensions of the disaffection began to become evident. At Umballah complaints of the cartridges were rife, and night after night mysterious fires in the native lines or among the Government offices showed the excitement of the soldiery. At Lucknow Sir Henry Lawrence, who was attempting with his usual ability to undo the hasty work of his predecessors, found himself compelled to disband one of the native regiments. Nana Sahib, from Cawnpore, began to show unwonted energy of intrigue, and at Meerut, on the 24th of April, 85 troopers of the 3d cavalry, a matter of importance because they were chiefly Mahomedans, refused to accept the ammunition offered them, although it was of the old pattern. Though there was thus every ground for apprehension, the punishment of the 34th was carried out with success, and in the beginning of May the regiment was disbanded. In less than a week any notion that the difficulty would be tided over was blown to the winds, and the mutiny had burst out in its full horror. On the 9th of May the 85 troopers of the 3d cavalry were stripped of their uniforms, and taken to the jail there to work out their sentence of ten years' hard labour. In the presence of the English troops their comrades allowed the sentence to be carried out without resistance. But on the following day, as the Sunday evening closed, and as the English population were on the way to church, the native troops broke into rebellion. European and native troops occupied separate lines in the cantonment, those of the Sepoys being nearest the town. The insurgents called to their assistance all the city rabble, the jail was broken open, the native lines burnt, the bungalows of the English officers within the lines pillaged, and many of the inhabitants, men, women, and children, murdered. General Hewitt, who was in command, brought his European troops, after some delay, to suppress the revolt, but the native regiments had already departed, organised and with arms in their hands. No pursuit was made, and the city mob was allowed to revel in the work of destruction throughout the night. The mutineers marched direct to Delhi, a distance of about 30 miles. The native troops there fraternised with the new arrivals; some of the English officers were put to death, others retreated to the great magazine, and finding it no longer tenable blew it up, while such as remained alive took refuge in flight. The old King of Delhi was drawn from his seclusion. His restoration

Mutiny at
Meerut.
May 10.

to the throne was declared, and the mutiny of the army had become a national revolt.

Where, as in India, a very small number of a dominant race hold in subjection a vast territory peopled by millions of men, a general uprising of the conquered populations, encountered by little groups of officials in scattered stations spread widely over the whole country, involves a series of separate struggles, and changes the history of the movement into an account of the personal doings, the bravery, the fertility of resource, and the sufferings of individual men. The history of the mutiny has been well described by its chief historian as "a bundle of biographies." In the first half of the year 1857, in scores of isolated stations, our fellow-countrymen were living through the same experiences. Weeks of uneasy suspicion, rendered terrible by nightly conflagrations; an ever-present dread suddenly realised at some unexpected moment by shouts and firing from the native lines; the hastening of the officers towards the mutineers to be shot down by the men they had so fatally trusted; the onward rush of soldier and city rabble upon the jail; the glare of burning bungalows; the flight of the Sepoy regiments if English help was at hand; if not, the hurried escape of women and children anywhere from immediate death; or the gallant rally of some few men of indomitable courage, determined in their little fortress at least to die fighting;—such were the universal incidents in the mutiny. Sometimes it was quelled by the grape-shot of the European troops, sometimes checked by the marvellous gallantry of a few brave men, sometimes sweeping to death and destruction all, men, women, and children, of European race. In the midst of such horrors it was natural to look upon every coloured face as the face of an enemy. Yet many a lady owed the safety of herself and her children to the fidelity of her native servants; not a few fugitives were sheltered in villages or by native landowners; no inconsiderable number even of the native troops themselves proved faithful in spite of the enormous pressure brought to bear upon them.

General
description
the Mutiny.

Apart from the mutiny of the Sepoys, which, inasmuch as the regiments were composed of men of all races and widely distributed, was very general, the movement of revolt occupied chiefly the centre of India. At one end of the great valley of the Ganges the Punjab was kept from rising by the skill and vigour of its administrators, and at the other end Bengal itself, at the seat of Government, was but little disturbed. Between those districts, ascending the river, lie Behar, with its chief city of

Geographical
limits of the
disaffected
district.

Patna, Oude, newly annexed, with Lucknow for its capital, and the North-West Provinces, including Rohilcund, and extending from the Himalaya across the river to below Jhansee. They contained the great Hindoo city of Benares, the important fort of Allahabad, Cawnpore, the administrative capital Agra, and the old imperial city Delhi. There had also been placed under the same jurisdiction territories reaching southward into the valley of the Nerbudda to the limits of the Mahratta State of Nagpore. The most important station in these territories was Saugor. South of the great body of the North-West Provinces, but somewhat wrapped round by the Saugor territory, lay what was known as Central India, the dominions of the protected Mahratta potentates Sindia and Holkar, with several other smaller states, of which Bopal was the most important. Sindia's capital was Gwalior, Holkar's was Indore. South of Delhi lay Rajputana, occupied by a considerable number of self-governing Hindoo Princes, under the suzerainty of England. In all these countries the shock of the rebellion was felt more or less severely. But its chief centres lay in the North-West Provinces and Oude. The importance of the movement in Behar lay in the interruption which, if successful, it would have caused to the line of communication between Calcutta and the rebellious centres; while, in like manner, any disturbance in Central India threatened the line of communication with Bombay, and should the disaffection have spread wider, opened a road for it into the Mahratta country, including the Bombay Presidency. The peculiar circumstances of Delhi and Lucknow, the one the place of assemblage for many mutinous regiments, and the home of the revived Mogul Empire, the other the capital of a newly annexed and thoroughly disaffected district, rendered them at first the most important points of interest. The central position of the revolted Provinces so completely separated these cities, that the events with which they were connected fall into distinct groups; and the troops employed against them formed separate armies working from opposite ends of the Empire. But although public attention was chiefly directed to Delhi and Lucknow, the condition of Central India and Gwalior was scarcely less critical. The restoration and maintenance of the English supremacy in those districts depended necessarily upon the assistance which could be afforded by the Southern Presidencies. But the Presidency of Bombay had its own difficulties. Largely composed of Mahratta States, and with an army recruited, like that of Bengal, chiefly from Oude, it was open to the same influences as the more northern Presidency. Fortunately the

energy and tact of Lord Elphinstone triumphed over his difficulties, and he was enabled to undertake, as will be seen, the reconquest of the Central Provinces. The Presidency of Madras was itself nearly free from the infection of the mutiny. Lord Harris, the Governor, was able, therefore, to use the troops at his disposal with marked effect in succouring the Europeans in Bengal.

The outbreak at Meerut proved to be a spark which exploded the smouldering mass of disaffection, and it blazed out at once in all directions. Before a month was over, in no less than forty stations the troops had mutinied with varying success. Such of them as got away unchecked from their cantonments gathered either at Lucknow or at Delhi, or when their work of slaughter had not been complete, they cooped up the few Europeans at the station in some entrenchment or fortress in which they had taken refuge. Thus at Agra, at Allahabad, and at Cawnpore, as well as in Lucknow, little garrisons of English were desperately holding their own. The line of communication along the great trunk road was entirely severed, and nothing but the determined loyalty of Sindia prevented his well-organised contingent at Gwalior from pouring down into the Ganges valley, and completing the destruction of the English. Rudely awakened to the terrible extent of the danger, the Government in Calcutta, which had at first perhaps thought somewhat too lightly of what had occurred, exhibited the greatest energy. It fortunately happened that the English expedition to Persia had proved a success, and that the troops which had been employed in the Gulf were already returning; eager despatches were sent to bring them quickly to Calcutta. Regiments were on their way to China, and an urgent message to Lord Elgin diverted them towards the more serious scene of danger. The Government of Ceylon was entreated to send what assistance it could spare, and regiments were hurriedly fetched up from Madras, bringing with them one of those men whose stern, even fierce energy, was at the moment so much required, in the person of Colonel Neill. Thus a powerful army was being gradually formed in the lower Provinces.

Meanwhile the English found an extraordinary source of strength in their newly acquired Province of Punjab. Upon annexing it, Lord Dalhousie had determined that its administration should be as perfect as possible. To find officials to whom to intrust it he had spared neither the civil nor the military service; the ablest men of both classes on whom he could lay his hands were there gathered. Over them he had at first placed,

General outbreak of the Mutiny.

The Punjab a source of strength.

in equal authority as members of a Commission, the two brothers Henry and John Lawrence, and Mr. Mansel. No two better men than the Lawrences could possibly have been selected. The noble and sympathetic character of Henry, his tenderness for the feelings and prejudices of the natives, joined with a firmness and decision which never wavered, had impressed itself deeply on the friends and subordinates with whom he worked. He had been thoroughly aware of the danger that lurked under the existing system of the native army, and, finding himself in the midst of a warlike population without the fine-drawn religious prejudices of the Hindoo, he had raised regiments on a different principle, allowing to the soldiers the use of their national costume, and placing them under the immediate command of a few picked English officers, on whose fitness as leaders he could rely. Thus had been formed bodies of irregular cavalry, and notably the corps of Guides, whose excellence and fidelity had been proved in constant activity on the frontier. After a while, it had seemed to Lord Dalhousie better that the joint Commission should give place to a single rule. And the transition period having passed, it was perhaps wise that the solid and statesmanlike ability, extraordinary self-devotion, and high administrative power of John Lawrence should have been preferred, and the sole commissionership should have been placed in his hands. It was undoubtedly a heavy blow to the elder brother, but he too had found a new and congenial position as superintendent of the difficult task of carrying out the great revolution in Oude. The change of government in the Punjab had at all events worked well. The firmest mutual reliance existed between the Chief Commissioner and his subordinates. No hasty introduction of English methods had checked the growing confidence between the people and their European rulers, engendered by the wise management of Henry Lawrence; nor had his military arrangements been interfered with.

In the furthest corner of the Province, in the post of danger at Peshawur, in the immediate neighbourhood of the Afghan passes, the ablest of the able group of Punjab officers were stationed. Herbert Edwardes, whose energy had been shown in the siege of Mooltan, was Commissioner there, having as his colleague in civil and political work John Nicholson, while the command of the considerable forces centred in the valley was held by a soldier of the firmest temper, Sydney Cotton. The full significance of the outbreak at Meerut, and the revolt of Delhi, was at once apparent to Sir John Lawrence. He

Energetic
measures of
John Lawrence.

understood the absolute necessity of immediately re-establishing the prestige of England by the capture of Delhi, the imperial city. He wrote to Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, at that time in the Himalayas, eagerly urging him to get together troops at once, and advance upon Delhi, and called upon the three officers at Peshawur to advise on the most efficient method of preserving the Punjab from the infection of mutiny, and of despatching every available man to assist the Commander-in-Chief, in what he considered his all-important task. The upshot of the council was the immediate formation of a movable column to suppress the mutiny wherever it might arise, the disarmament of every doubtful regiment, the stern punishment of every open mutineer, and the large enlistment and rapid organisation of new native recruits to supply the places of the disbanded regiments. To the command of the movable column, regardless of all claims of seniority, Lawrence appointed Nicholson, with the rank of Brigadier. The energetic measures taken answered all the hopes of the Commissioner. Sikh regiments, whose fidelity never faltered, were rapidly formed. The mountain tribesmen were enlisted in a sort of militia. A terrible execution, at which forty mutineers were blown from the guns, carried terror to the hearts of the wavering Sepoys. The doubtful regiments at Peshawur were disarmed without difficulty, and when subsequently they broke away and attempted to join the other mutineers, Nicholson, with a party of police, in a fierce pursuit of twenty hours' duration, utterly destroyed them. Subsequently the movable column, inspired by his fiery energy, brought security to all the outlying stations.

Anson, though he knew the difficulties that lay in his way, and the smallness of the resources at his command, had not hesitated; a force, chiefly of Europeans, was rapidly got together at Umballah. A siege train, brought in the nick of time across the Sutlej from the Government arsenal at Phillour, over a bridge which two hours later was swept away by the rising river, was added to the force, and it started on its way towards Delhi. The Commander-in-Chief did not live to accompany it. Suffering from ill-health, and weakened by the anxieties of the time, he fell an easy victim to the cholera (May 27th). His place was taken by Sir Henry Barnard, under whom the column advanced to meet the English troops from Meerut, within a few miles from Delhi. On the way the Meerut division defeated, on a rivulet of the Hindon, a body of rebel troops. The junction between Barnard and Wilson was effected, and after a successful battle, a ridge covering the north and

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The siege of
Delhi.

north-east side of the city was seized and occupied. On previous occasions Delhi had never proved a formidable obstacle to an advancing army. Lord Canning, at the other end of India, felt so sure that it would be immediately disposed of, that he sent instructions to the General to detach a portion of his troops to the North-West Provinces. It is just possible that, as in the case of Sebastopol, so here, an immediate assault might have produced great results; and such a measure was urged by the younger and more vehement officers of the force. But Sir Henry Barnard, taking into consideration the extreme inequality of numbers, the terrible effect which would attend failure, and the difficulties involved in lengthened street fighting, determined against immediate action, and waited for reinforcements. It was from the Punjab alone that those reinforcements could come; and as a first instalment the Guides, after one of the most extraordinary marches on record, in which they covered 580 miles in 22 days, entered the camp without any appearance of fatigue. But when all the troops that could be spared had been despatched, there still seemed but little chance of the capture of the city. The besieging force was in fact itself besieged. Again and again the ridge was assaulted; always indeed with the same result, but always with a loss which the little army could ill afford. Sir Henry Barnard, weakened by his incessant exertions, before long, like his predecessor, fell a victim to disease; and the supreme command, after a short interval during which it was intrusted to General Reed, devolved upon Archdale Wilson, the commander of the troops from Meerut.

So gloomy was the aspect of affairs, so inclined to despondency was the Commander, that there was even some thought of withdrawing from the siege. Sir John Lawrence, on whom all men relied, had been kept fully informed of every fact and every feeling, and for a moment the time appeared to him so critical that he even thought it might be necessary to concentrate our strength by withdrawing within the Indus. He had but lately, during the Persian assault upon Herat, contracted a treaty of friendship with Dost Mahommed, the Afghan ruler, buying his friendship by subsidies and gifts of arms. He believed that he could trust the friendship thus established, and proposed to make over to him the Peshawur valley, the possession of which was known to be his strongest desire. Such a scheme seemed to Edwardes and his friends simply suicidal. Full of interest in their own work, and somewhat puffed up by their own success, they considered the maintenance of the integrity of the Punjab the most important of all

Lawrence's
proposal to
abandon
Peshawar.

was the Commander, that there was even some thought of withdrawing from the siege. Sir John Lawrence, on whom all men relied, had been kept fully informed of

things, looked with some scorn on what they considered the want of energy on the part of the besiegers of Delhi, and were deficient, perhaps, in that broader view of the necessities of the Empire which was influencing their leader. Their representations to him at all events made him pause. It was only as a last resource, if disaster threatened at Delhi, that he had dreamt of retirement. He determined to make one more effort to put off the terrible alternative. With a grand audacity he made up his mind to trust the Punjab wholly to his Sikh troops, and to the wise management of the administrative officers, and ventured to despatch to the great siege Nicholson, with his movable column, on which hitherto the safety of the country had rested, while a siege train of greater power than that already in position was ordered down from Ferozepore.

While Lawrence was thus directing all his efforts to reinforcing the troops at Delhi, and trusting that the energy of Nicholson and the arrival of the siege train would render certain the assault of the town, so long delayed, Lord Canning and the Central Government were sending forward to the front, as rapidly as possible, every man that could be spared in order to save the beleaguered garrisons in the North-West Provinces. The troops thus disposable were those which gradually arrived from Madras, from Persia, and from the Chinese expedition. The first to arrive were the Madras Fusiliers, under the energetic command of Colonel Neill. They could only be sent forward in comparatively small detachments, for the railway was not completed, and the transport service beyond it was slow. Securing Bengal itself on his way, by breaking up the native troops at Benares, Neill reached Allahabad on the 11th of June. But Allahabad was not in English hands. It was the first of those places in the north-west where the revolt had proved too strong for suppression, and where the English had been compelled to take refuge in fortresses and entrenchments. The relief of these besieged garrisons was the first business of the troops advancing from Bengal. Beyond Allahabad lay Cawnpore, upon the Ganges, and a little distance to the north was Lucknow, the capital of Oude. The fort of Allahabad had been only saved from the fury of the mutineers by the fidelity of a Sikh regiment. The insurrection around had assumed a national character, the ousted Talukdars had made common cause with the Sepoys, and there here appeared for the first time a man, known as the Moolvee, who could be in some way regarded as a national leader. The arrival of Neill infused fresh vigour into the garrison. He at once began offen-

Advance of
European
troops from
Calcutta.

Relief of
Allahabad.
June 11.

sive operations ; by the end of June he had reconquered the city and the neighbourhood, and was getting together a force to push onwards for the relief of the other beleaguered Englishmen. He was not destined himself to command it. Lord Canning had intrusted that duty to General Havelock, a senior officer just returned from Persia. Somewhat hurt at being thus superseded, Neill nevertheless continued loyally to collect and organise the brigade till its commanding officer should arrive. On the last day of June Major Renaud was sent forward with the van of the relieving force. This force was also charged with the terrible duty of retribution ; and now began those fearful scenes which, inevitable though perhaps they were, render the story of the successful suppression of the mutiny so painful. The executions of the natives were apparently indiscriminate to the last degree. In two days forty-two men were hanged by the roadside. A batch of twelve were executed merely because their faces were turned the wrong way, and every village in the line of march was burnt.

The advance was a few days too late. On the 3d of July a spy had brought information that the garrison of Cawnpore had surrendered and had been mercilessly murdered. The commander of the troops in that town had been Sir Hugh Wheeler. In the immediate neighbourhood were large native cantonments, and at a few miles' distance at Bithoor lived Nana Sahib, the claimant to the dignity of Peishwa. Wheeler had seen the coming storm, and had been conscious that he was unable to resist it. He believed his safety to lie only in defence, in holding out till reinforcements should come to his relief. For this purpose he had made a rough entrenchment, to which in the case of mutiny the English might retire. The choice of its position had been unfortunate. At the western end of the town upon the river-side was a strong and defensible building used as a magazine. But instead of employing this as his citadel, Wheeler had thrown up a rude entrenchment at the other end of the city near the old cantonments. It enclosed two barracks, but one of these was thatched and liable to fire, and the entrenchment itself was too low to afford complete shelter, and was constructed of loose earth. Into this insufficient citadel he had withdrawn with such of the Europeans as had not been put to death at the first outbreak of the Mutiny, and with a small number of faithful Sepoys. And there for three weeks men women and children huddled together had endured the profoundest misery, with insufficient food, scorched by fearful heat, with water almost unattainable, and exposed to a constant fire

The defence
of Cawnpore.

from the abundant ordnance with which our own magazine had supplied the rebels. The chief burden of defence had fallen on Captain Moore. Under his energetic direction every point of vantage had been secured and every attack repelled. Civilian, soldier, and women alike displayed a most absolute self-devotion. But one of the barracks was burnt, and the little garrison was gradually wearing away ; their provisions were exhausted ; to approach the well, which was outside the work, was almost certain death. Hope of relief seemed gradually to fade, and when at the end of three weeks a message came from Nana Sahib to the effect that if the garrison would capitulate he would supply the boats to allow them to drop safely down to Allahabad, the leaders thought their only course was to accept the offer. At the beginning of the outbreak so little had the mind of Nana Sahib been known that Wheeler had invited him as an ally to assist him in bringing the garrison into the entrenchments. But the Mahratta Prince had seen his opportunity. It was he who had stopped the mutineers from going off to Delhi, and had organised the attack on the Fort, and it was he who was now the acknowledged leader of the assailants. The capitulation offered was an act of cruel treachery. Surrounded by a threatening crowd, the little remnant proceeded to the river and entered the boats, only to find the river lined with enemies. All the men were killed except two, for one boat was swept down the stream, and from its crew two managed to escape. The women and children were all collected and put in a small house called the Beebee-Ghur. The stories which were rife of the fearful injuries done them appear to be untrue. Ill-used and insulted they were, and set to perform menial offices at the Nana's residence ; worse injuries they were spared.

Massacre of
the garrison.
June 27.

It was the news of the massacre at the boats which met the advancing columns on the 3d of July. Renaud's column was thus marching direct upon a victorious enemy. Havelock with all speed set out with little more than 1000 men, and on the 12th of July came up with his advanced guard, the whole force having reached a point close to the city of Futteypore. Expecting to find Renaud's detachment only, the enemy came down in triumph and suffered from the hands of Havelock the first great defeat of that long series which marked the restoration of our power. Futteypore was given over to plunder. But there was no time to waste. The next day the army continued its advance, gained a second victory at the village of Aon, and passed the river.

Victory of
Havelock
at Futteypore.
July 12.

On that same day Nana Sahib, urged by what reasons it is im-

possible to tell, decreed the slaughter of all the prisoners in the Beebee-Ghur. Into the crowded room butchers were sent who cut to pieces every woman and child, about 200 in number, and cast them dead or dying into a neighbouring well. He then fought his last battle for supremacy. With a force of some 6000 men and much artillery he tried to check the advancing English. The skilful tactics of Havelock, who threw his whole strength upon the left wing, proved however entirely successful. The battle was a crushing defeat to the temporary power of the Peishwa, and the next day Cawnpore was again occupied by the English. But the recapture of Cawnpore, too late to save the Europeans, was but a first step towards the greater work of relieving the Lucknow garrison. So leaving Neill to support English authority in the reoccupied city, and to deal a bloody vengeance on the inhabitants, Havelock speedily moved across the river into Oude. His force was ridiculously small for the purpose, numbering about 1500 men, while for cavalry there were but 60 volunteer horse. He was already in indirect communication with Lucknow. He had received a memorandum written in Greek characters, from the hands of a spy, describing the position and condition of the garrison, and had returned an answer that he would relieve them within a week. Yet it was not without misgivings—only to be too surely fulfilled—as to the possibility of his task that on the 25th of July he set forward.

It was natural that Oude should be the very centre of the Mutiny. There more than elsewhere all the causes of dissatisfaction were collected. Perfectly aware of the danger, Sir Henry Lawrence used every effort to postpone the outbreak, and meanwhile prepared for any event. He turned the residency and another palace called the Machi Bawan, both lying between the city and the river Goomtee and commanding the bridges, into fortified positions, determining to withdraw thither with all the European inhabitants in case of extreme necessity. On the 30th of May the troops in the Lucknow cantonments for the most part mutinied. The vigour and skill of Lawrence and his assistants prevented a general outbreak, but all the native troops, regular and irregular, with the exception of about 500, broke away. Within the next few days every station in all the five districts of Oude passed out of the hands of the English. On the 12th of June Lawrence wrote that he was still holding the cantonments and his two city posts, but that every outpost had fallen, and that he was in daily expectation of being besieged by the confederated mutineers and their allies.

Massacre of
Cawnpore.
July 15.

Havelock's
victory
at Cawnpore.
July 17.

Sir Henry
Lawrence's
preparations
at Lucknow.

Just before writing this letter his health had so completely given way that he had resigned the command into the hands of a council of five, presided over by Mr. Martin Gubbins, the Financial Commissioner. A very gallant and energetic man, Gubbins was wanting in breadth of view. He determined to be entirely rid of the native troops, and had actually proceeded to disband and send to their home that faithful few who had resisted the mutiny of May 30. Lawrence was so distressed with this action that in spite of his failing health he at once resumed the command, recalled the Sepoys, and reorganised them into a little force, which proved faithful throughout all the critical time that was coming. He also, still pursuing his policy of trust, summoned the old pensioned Sepoys in the town to re-enlist. Old, broken, and wounded, some 500 of them came to offer their services. From among these Lawrence selected about 170, and added them to his faithful natives. Thus in deep anxiety, not yet besieged but quite unable to afford any assistance to others, Lawrence awaited the fate of Cawnpore. When Wheeler and his garrison capitulated, the mutineers who had been gradually collecting and watching events in Cawnpore at once moved upon Lucknow. Lawrence was not the man to await them passively. He believed strongly—in the case of Asiatic warfare at least—in offensive defence. Drawing his troops therefore into the residency from the cantonments, he organised a little force and pushed out to meet the rebels towards Chinhat, to the north of the city.¹ But his force proved too small for success, and its effectiveness was still further diminished by the disaffection of some of the native artillery. The mutineers, taking advantage of their large numbers, wrapped round Lawrence's force; it was worsted and compelled to retire with the loss of two guns and a howitzer. The enemy immediately occupied the city, and began to prepare for assaulting the Machi Bawan and the residency.

Even with the faithful natives the English force was not sufficiently strong to occupy the two positions. The Machi Bawan, with an immense amount of ammunition, was therefore blown up. On the 1st of July there were concentrated in the residency 765 native soldiers and 927 Europeans, including the officers of mutinied regiments, the civil officials, and members of the uncovenanted service who had contrived to make their way thither from the city, or from the various outlying stations. Besides these there were about 130 women and children who had taken refuge in the fort. Then began what is perhaps the most extraordinary siege

Lawrence
defeated at
Chinhat.
June 30.

Siege of
Lucknow.

¹ See plan of Lucknow, p. 321.

on record. The residency was a rough parallelogram, the outer circuit of which consisted of various houses joined by a rapidly made wall. Each of these buildings was converted into a post, and placed in charge of a certain number of men. Throughout the siege, such was the paucity of the garrison, these posts could never be changed or relieved. If some of the defenders died the remainder had still to maintain their position with their lessened numbers. If, as not unfrequently happened, their post was broken down, they had themselves to build it up again. The centralisation was maintained by the Assistant Adjutant-General, who went every night to every post, and reported to the Commander. There was also a reserve under the immediate command of the Brigadier, to be hurried at his orders aloze to any spot of special danger; by the 18th of August its numbers had been reduced to eighteen. The ladies and the headquarters occupied the buildings in the centre of the square. Two days after the beginning of the siege the garrison suffered an irreparable loss in the death of Sir Henry Lawrence. death of Sir Henry Lawrence, who was killed in his own room by a shell. His place was taken by Brigadier-General Inglis, who proved a not unworthy successor, making use with extraordinary skill and tenacity of will of the position which the foresight of his predecessor had prepared. Afraid of any divided authority, he insisted upon keeping the appointment of Commissioner vacant, and exercising supreme command; and, aided by a readiness of resource and devoted courage on the part of all whom he commanded unequalled perhaps in any deed of war, he succeeded in holding his ground for 87 days against the overwhelming forces assailing him. His assailants were enemies not to be despised. They were well supplied with heavy ordnance. The buildings in their possession were within pistol-shot of his walls. They showed great skill in driving covering trenches to their batteries, and had frequent and sometimes successful recourse to mines. Fortunately they were less formidable in actual assault. It was three weeks before they could make up their minds to make an attack. Those three weeks had enabled the garrison much to strengthen their position, and to perfect their organisation; and although the attack was made after the successful springing of a mine, and covered by heavy artillery fire, it was repulsed with comparatively slight loss on the part of the besieged. Again three weeks elapsed without assault. It was a time of increasing misery. The garrison was not sufficiently numerous to attend properly to the sanitary requirements of the residency; overpowering stenches, a plague of flies, fever, cholera, and small-pox added to the sufferings of the

garrison, which was all this time cut off from all external communication. At last on the 25th of July a spy came in with a letter stating that Havelock was advancing with a force sufficient to bear down all opposition, and that he would arrive in five or six days. An occasional sound of firing on the Cawnpore road confirmed their hopes. They proved however vain. The month of August passed away, during which, though three great assaults were repelled, the constant toil and gradually decreasing supply of food began to tell heavily on the garrison. On the 28th a letter was received. It was not one to raise their hearts. General Havelock stated that he had no hope of relieving them for 25 days. Again under incessant fire for another dreary three weeks, the little band of heroes waited. On the 16th of September the same spy, whose name was Ungud, was sent out for the fourth time, and on the 22nd he came back with the joyful news that the relieving force might be expected in three or four days. On the next day signs of its approach were perceived, and on the 25th became clear. The fire of the besiegers slackened, musketry and cannon were heard close at hand. Shortly after noon people were seen flying across the bridges with their baggage, and at four o'clock European troops were actually in view fighting their way through the principal streets. "And then," writes Captain Wilson, the Assistant Adjutant-General, "ensued a scene which baffles description. For 87 days the Lucknow garrison had lived in utter ignorance of all that had taken place outside. Wives who had long mourned their husbands as dead were again restored to them. Others fondly looking forward to glad meetings with those near and dear to them now for the first time learned that they were alone. On all sides eager inquiries for relations and friends were made. Alas! in too many instances the answer was a painful one." The relief had arrived, but proved to be little more than a reinforcement, incapable of driving the enemy before it, and in some way adding to the difficulties of the garrison by the increased consumption of their scanty supply of food.

On the 21st of July Havelock had set out from Cawnpore, and had brought his little army across the Ganges. On the 29th it had been able to make its first real advance, and at once had given the enemy a severe defeat. The want of cavalry prevented a sufficient pursuit, but after a few hours' halt Havelock at once, even in the terrible heat of July, pushed forward. A march of six miles brought him again in front of the rebels. He conceived a skilful plan which would have led to their complete de-

Arrival of
Havelock,
Sept. 25.

Reasons for
Havelock's
delay.

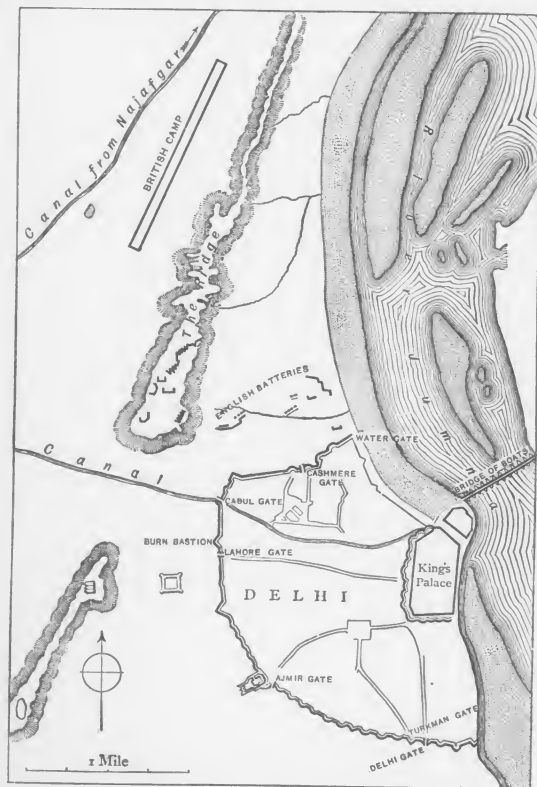
struction, but the regiment which should have cut off their retreat had not reached its position when the other parts of the arrangement had proved successful, and the enemy, though beaten, were able to withdraw. Havelock had on this day won two battles, but he had now with him for actual combat little more than 800 men, and already his communications with Cawnpore were threatened. He had learned the strength of the enemy, and considering that he would have to fight not only for every mile of ground between his present position and Lucknow, but through a mile and a half of streets when he reached the city, he came to the conclusion that he had undertaken an impossibility and withdrew to Cawnpore. Twice more in the space of a few days, as reinforcements reached him, he advanced on the Lucknow road and defeated the enemy. But the reason which had induced his first withdrawal had now become stronger. For the contingent of Gwalior had mutinied against Sindia; it might at any time cut the communications between Cawnpore and Allahabad, and the question appeared now to be rather whether Cawnpore could be maintained than whether Lucknow could be relieved. At Cawnpore therefore Havelock determined to remain, hearing from Sir Colin Campbell, the newly arrived Commander-in-Chief, that reinforcements would be sent him. At the same time he learned what must have been

Outram's arrival at Cawnpore, Sept. 15. a severe blow to him, that Sir James Outram was coming to supersede him. On the 15th of September Outram, having on his road secured his communications with Allahabad, arrived at Cawnpore. The intervening time had been passed in organising the troops, which were now ready for the arrival of the General. But Outram, the most chivalrous of men, declined to rob Havelock of the glorious task he had so well begun. He issued a general order declaring that he left the command in his hands till the relief of Lucknow was accomplished, and would himself serve as a volunteer. With a little over 3000 men therefore Havelock on the 19th of September once more crossed the Ganges and set out on his final march to the city. With some fighting, but without any serious check, he swept forward, till on the 23rd he drew towards the southern side of Lucknow, and approached the strongly fortified palace of the Alambagh. From this the enemy were driven, and two days of continuous and triumphant fighting brought the longed-for relief to Inglis and his weary troops. The victory had been gained with very heavy loss; 700 men had fallen since leaving Cawnpore, among them the gallant General Neill. Thus it was that Havelock found himself unable to bring away in safety the women and children from the

residency, and thought it wiser to wait a whole month longer till a more complete relief could be affected, confident meanwhile that thus reinforced there was no further danger of the fall of Lucknow

While thus at Lucknow English rule was being with difficulty re-established, the siege of Delhi—upon the other side of the revolted Provinces which broke the continuity of the Empire—was brought to a triumphant conclusion. The troops upon the Ridge had been in such straits that General Wilson had seriously thought of withdrawing them. The arrival of Nicholson put a new complexion on affairs, and cast all such ideas to the winds. His first exploit was a victory over the rebels who had got behind our position and were seeking at Najafghar to intercept the siege-train from Ferozepore. He found in Major Baird Smith, who was directing the engineers, a man as eager as himself to bring the siege to a conclusion. Their urgent representations induced General Wilson to allow operations to be at once hotly pressed, with a view to a speedy assault. The city lies on the Jumna, which washes its eastern side. The northern defences, against which the assault was to be directed, run nearly at right angles to the river as far as the Cabul Gate. The line of the wall there turns southward, coming first to the Lahore gate opening directly westward. On the arrival of the siege train, batteries were quickly erected so as to demolish the northern front of the city, and to allow of the approach of storming parties with some hope of success. Between the 7th and 10th of September the batteries were completed and opened fire, one towards the Water Gate at less than 200 yards distance from the wall. Its effect was naturally tremendous, and by the 13th it was thought that two sufficient breaches had been made in the Water Bastion and the Cashmere Bastion. The assault, which was intrusted to four columns, was twofold, upon the defences on the north-east and upon the Lahore Gate on the west. While Nicholson and Jones stormed the breaches in the neighbourhood of the Water Battery, Colonel Campbell was to enter the Cashmere Gate after it had been blown open by a party of engineers. A fourth column, under Major Reid, who had constantly borne the brunt of the assaults at the extreme end of the English Ridge, and who therefore was thoroughly acquainted with the ground, was to clear the suburbs at the west side of the city, and making its way through the Lahore Gate was to meet the troops coming in from the north-east. A fifth column was held in reserve. After weeks of waiting, and a delay which many of the more ardent spirits regarded as unnecessary, the critical time at length arrived. It was felt that failure would

be ruinous to the British Empire—that the Punjab, hitherto peaceful, would rise, and every discontented man in India believe that the fortune of England had failed her.



At early dawn on the 14th of September the three storming columns began their advance. With desperate fighting Nicholson forced his

way through the Cashmere breach, and Jones at the Water Bastion not only forced the breach but unexpectedly stormed a part of the wall itself, and once upon the ramparts proceeded to clear them as far as the extreme north-west corner, and there to ^{Great assault. Sept. 14.} hoist the British flag upon the Cabul Gate. Meanwhile the third column, preceded by its explosion party, advanced to the Cashmere Gate. Lieutenant Home and four men, each carrying a bag of twenty-five pounds of powder, pushed straight on to the gate, laid their bags ready for the explosion, and jumped into the ditch unhurt. The other engineer, Salkeld, likewise succeeded in laying his bags, but fell back shot through both arm and leg. The fusee was still unlighted; two sergeants in turn seized the porte-fire only to fall back mortally wounded. A third snatched it up, but finding that the fusee was already alight, sprang into the ditch at the very moment that the gate was shattered by the explosion. The signal was then given, and the third column, led by the 52nd, crossed the bridge just as the other breaches were taken, and pushed forward into the very heart of the city. Yet the success was not decisive. Major Reid's party, assaulted outside the wall, had been unable to make good its entrance. Nothing in fact but the north-eastern line of ramparts was in the hands of the English, and Colonel Campbell was obliged to seek safety by falling back. It was necessary, if the city was to be taken, that something should be done to make up for Reid's failure, and to open an access on the western face. Nicholson regarded the capture of the Lahore gate as necessary. He swept round inside the ramparts, but found that the approach to the gate was through a narrow lane with houses on both sides strongly manned. He would listen to no argument in favour of delay; he ordered the position to be at once assaulted. It was too strong, his men were driven back. A second time the attempt was made. The General rushed forward to rally his men and bring them again to the assault, and fell mortally wounded. The Lahore Gate at that time proved impregnable.

But at least a firm hold had been laid on a part of the city, and a solid base established for further operations. Even yet, it is said, such had been the heavy loss of his troops, General Wilson was thinking of withdrawing to the Ridge. The fatal design, if it was really formed, was frustrated by the eager remonstrances of Baird Smith and of Neville Chamberlain, the Adjutant-General. It was determined to work into the city chiefly by means of burrowing through the houses. For days this process went on. Still, though the English

constantly advanced, the Lahore Gate, which led to the great central street of the town, could not be forced. A gallant effort made on it under the command of Greathed failed. But at length, upon the 19th, five days after the original assault, Alexander Taylor, the chief engineer under Baird Smith, obtained permission to bore through the neighbouring houses and gain a bastion known as the Burn Bastion, which commanded the Lahore Gate. The work was done, and with it the capture of the city may be said to have been completed. The next day the palace upon the river-side was taken, and the king and the rebel troops fled from the city.

The English victory was followed here as elsewhere by acts of bitter and cruel revenge. The city was pillaged by the Sikh soldiers, and martial law, carried out with little discrimination, hurried hundreds to the gallows. Of these but little was heard. One deed of ill-judged and uncalled-for severity stained the reputation of the conquerors. The old king, betrayed by his chief advisers, fell into the hands of Hodson, a man of the greatest dash and bravery, but of somewhat reckless and unscrupulous character. Having pledged himself to spare the king's life he unwillingly kept his word. But to the king's sons he would give no such pledge; and bringing them towards the city from the tomb of Humayoun, where they had taken refuge, he caused them to descend from their palanquins, and pistolled them with his own hands.

The close of September thus saw the success of the English arms at Delhi and Lucknow, the two great centres of rebellion. But the mutiny and the widespread national revolt which had accompanied it were by no means suppressed. While the fate of Delhi still hung in the balance, and day by day the chances of the English success were apparently growing smaller, insurrections, postponed awhile either by fear or by the skilful management of English administration, had been breaking out in all directions. With difficulty George Lawrence had succeeded in saving the arsenal at Ajmeer, and in keeping the Rajput Princes in outward loyalty. In the Central Provinces, Sindia and Holkar themselves had been true to the English, but the troops at Indore had mutinied, and the line of communication with the Nerbudda had only been kept open by the advance of a column from Bombay. The Gwalior contingents, scarcely restrained by the authority of Sindia, were threatening to throw off his allegiance and attack Agra and Cawnpore, in the first of which Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor, occupied the fort, and was still exercising some authority over the city, while the second,

Fall of Delhi.
Sept. 19.

Murder of the
king's sons.

General view
of the state
of affairs in
September.

the most advanced point of the unbroken English dominions, was of the last importance, not only as the base of all operations for the succour of Lucknow, but as the centre from which the force for the permanent reconquest of the revolted Provinces must advance. Fortunately, Mr. William Tayler had been able to retain Patna, and Frederick Gubbins and Neill had restored order at Benares, so that it was possible to send troops without interruption upwards from Calcutta. When Sir Colin Campbell had reached India in August to take up his duties as Commander-in-Chief things were at their very worst. Delhi was still untaken, Lucknow still unrelieved, while the policy of trusting the Sepoy regiments outwardly as far as possible, though secretly feeling the deepest mistrust of them, compelled the Government to keep in the Lower Provinces such European regiments as it had, and prevented the despatch of reinforcements. The Commander-in-Chief had therefore to spend much time in organising such an army as should insure success. Not only had he to await the arrival of troops, but also to establish means of transport, and to supply nearly everything that was necessary for an army in the field. During September and the beginning of October he was incessantly employed in sending troops to the front, and though Delhi had now fallen, the partial relief of Lucknow had but added to his difficulties by locking up a considerable body of troops which would otherwise have been available.

At length, with every man he could procure, including a naval brigade under the command of Captain Peel, on the 27th of October Sir Colin Campbell set out for Allahabad. On the 3rd of November he reached Cawnpore. Thither, pushing down from Delhi, a column had arrived after defeating the enemy at Agra, and now under the command of Sir Hope Grant was some way upon the road towards Lucknow. The final relief of the garrison there was the first task which Sir Colin Campbell set himself. It was attended with extreme danger. For the Gwalior contingent had on the fall of Delhi thrown off all allegiance to their Prince, had combined with the troops under the Rane of Jhansee, and had placed themselves under the able command of Tantia Topi, the right-hand man of Nana Sahib. With the exception of the Moolvee at Lucknow, Tantia Topi was almost the only man among the insurgents who exhibited military capacity. He at once threatened Cawnpore. It was thus, with his base of operations left in imminent danger, that the Commander-in-Chief had to make his advance. On the 12th he arrived at the Alambagh. This strongly fortified enclosure was occu-

Sir Colin
Campbell's
campaign.

pied by upwards of 900 men detached from Outram's forces. When they were incorporated with the advancing troops they raised the number of Sir Colin Campbell's army to about 5000. An Englishman of the name of Kavanagh had made his way out of Lucknow with information which induced the Commander-in-Chief to determine to make his assault upon the suburbs of the city lying along the river, instead of forcing his way straight inwards as Havelock had done. His unexpected flank movement somewhat disordered the enemy; but a series of large buildings, palaces, and mosques, each of which had been turned into a powerful fortress, made the advance extremely difficult. Even by the evening of the 16th it was only after the storming of a mosque called the Shah

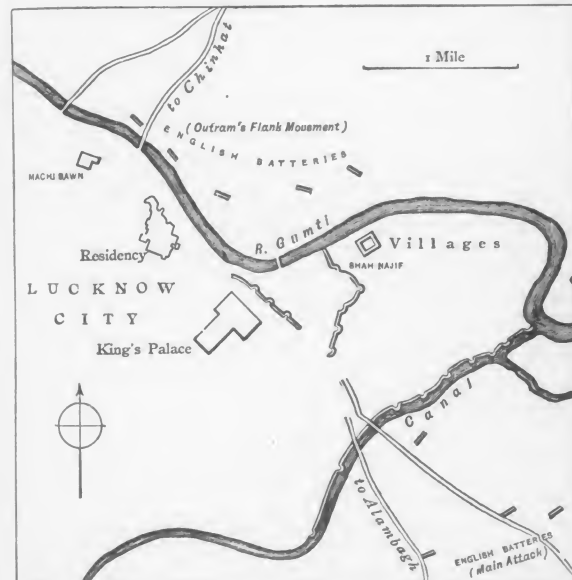
He rescues the
garrison at
Lucknow.
Nov. 17.

Najif, an action described by Sir Colin Campbell as almost unexampled in war, that the relieving force felt that its success was certain. Nor was it till the following day that the residency was actually reached. There still remained the difficult task of bringing off the helpless convoy of women and children. Under cover of a bombardment, which drew away the attention of the enemy, the garrison so long imprisoned was withdrawn behind the outposts arranged to cover its retreat. No disaster attended the movement, except the death of General Havelock. A man of deeply religious and enthusiastic temperament, his advance in the army had been slow, and he had but just reached the great object of his ambition, the command of an army in the field. When his career was thus prematurely closed, he had lived long enough to show that he possessed all the best qualities of a general. Sir James Outram was left behind with a force to hold the Alambagh; and not without anxiety as to what might be happening in his rear, Sir Colin Campbell hurried back towards Cawnpore. As he approached it the sound of guns warned him that his arrival was none too soon. During his absence Tantia Topi and the Gwalior contingent had come down upon General Windham in Cawnpore and had cut off his communications with Sir Colin Campbell. Left to himself, he adopted the determination to attack rather than to await an attack. But he was not strong enough to withstand an enemy so superior in numbers. He found himself forced back upon his entrenchments, and the town was again in the hands of the rebels when Sir Colin Campbell's returning troops

His victory at
Cawnpore.
Dec. 6.

appeared just in time to prevent complete disaster. The convoy being at once despatched to Allahabad, a battle was fought, in which the most dangerous part of the enemy, the Gwalior contingent, was entirely broken up, and but for

an error on the part of the general to whom the duty of intercepting them was intrusted, the fugitives from the other part of the army would have been annihilated. As it was they succeeded in falling back upon Bithoor. The error was, however, partially retrieved by a vigorous pursuit headed by Sir Hope Grant. Several successful engagements, by which the communication with the north-west was



opened and the Doab, or territory between the rivers, cleared, left the English general free to turn his attention either to Rohilcund or to Oude.

His own desire was to reduce Rohilcund during the winter months, leaving Lucknow for the following year. With wiser political insight Lord Canning saw that the very head of the mutiny was Oude, and insisted upon its immediate and complete subjection. In Lucknow,

VICT.

X

under the command of the Moolvee and of the Begum, who had assumed the royal title, were concentrated most of the rebel troops of Oude. For Jung Bahadur, the virtual chief of Nepal, had offered his assistance, and attacked the country with his Ghoorkas on the north, while General Franks, moving from the east, had driven all before him in a brilliant march, during which he had four times conquered a largely superior force. Outram, stationed at the Alam-bagh, had proved himself able to hold the rebels in check, and to resist their frequent vehement assaults. The force of the enemy thus driven in from all sides amounted probably in Lucknow at this time to 150,000 fighting men. The force with which Sir Colin Campbell now undertook his final assault upon the city was very different from the small and hastily collected bodies with which he and Havelock had previously fought their way to the beleaguered garrison. He was now able to dispose of 20,000 men and 180 guns. With this large force at his command he assaulted the city in accordance with a well-laid and scientific plan. The main attack was, as before, to be directed against the east (or more correctly the south-east) face of the city. In expectation of this movement the enemy had constructed

Capture of
Lucknow by
Sir Colin
Campbell.
March 22, 1858.

several strong lines of defence, covered at their left, or north-eastern extremity, by the river. But Sir Colin Campbell observed that, trusting to the river, the lines were not carried beyond it, and that an army crossing to the northern bank would be able to turn the position. While therefore the main attack was directed against the front of the enemy's defences, Sir James Outram, acting on the northern side of the river, successively turned the three strong lines of which they consisted; and though not without very severe fighting, lasting for three or four days, the rebels were at length entirely defeated and driven from the town, which was firmly and finally occupied by the English troops. After the final capture of Lucknow the tide of victory turned. The re-establishment of order and the British rule in Oude and the North-west Provinces, with whatever difficulties it might yet be attended, was now certain.

Meanwhile in the Provinces of Central India the British power had been reasserting itself amid the same difficulties and with the same triumphant result. The action of Sir Colin Campbell had been constantly hampered by threatened assaults from the revolted Gwalior contingent. After his victory at Cawnpore it had withdrawn under Tantia Topi and Rao Sahib, the nephew of Nana Sahib, to the fortress of Calpee, where,

Reduction of
the Central
Provinces.

in a strongly fortified position, it had established an important arsenal. The whole country southward was in rebellion. The troops of Holkar had mutinied, but Colonel Durand had so far mastered their insurrection that the English maintained themselves at Mao, and kept open the line of the Nerbudda and connection with the Bombay Presidency. Durand had been Acting Commissioner during the absence of Sir Robert Hamilton, who returned to India in August, and having consulted with the authorities in Calcutta, resumed his work at Indore in December, in order to carry out the plan agreed upon for the reconquest of the Central Provinces. It had been decided that two columns, the one from Madras the other from Bombay, should push across the country and reach the great rivers, the one at Calpee the other at Banda. The Madras column was to be under Whitelock. The commander of the Bombay column, Sir Hugh Rose, came to Indore in company with Hamilton, and at once began his advance. Few military operations have been more brilliant than the successful march of his army. On the 6th of January he left Indore, and advanced eastward in the direction of Saugor. On his way thither he besieged the stronghold of Rathgar, and defeating a relieving army sent against it by the Rajah of Banpore, captured it on the 29th. On the third of February he relieved Saugor, which had now been besieged for nearly eight months. He thence turned northward, forced his way with constant fighting through the difficult passes at Madanpore, formed a junction with the 2nd brigade of his division, which, following a different course, had stormed the strong city of Chandaree, and with his forces thus collected pushed on towards Jhansee. The Ranees of Jhansee was one of the chief opponents of the English, and had been guilty at the first outbreak of the mutiny of the treacherous massacre of some fifty English, men, women, and children. It was of the last importance that her stronghold should be taken. It was a place of extraordinary strength, lying a little to the westward of the Betwa river, and consisted of a strongly fortified walled town, and beyond that of a fortress upon high ground of still greater strength. It was occupied by 11,000 men, Sepoys and native levies. Against Sir Hugh Rose could bring a force not much exceeding 1500. It was invested by the cavalry on all sides, and batteries were directed against its eastern wall. For seventeen days an incessant fire was kept up by both sides. For breaching purposes only two eighteen-pounders were available, but after a while a barely practicable breach was effected. But just as the English commander

Sir Hugh Rose's
march.
Jan. 1858.

Siege of
Jhansee.

was thinking of an assault, news of a most disturbing character reached him. For Tantia Topi had come out from Calpee, had captured Charkaree, the residence of a friendly Rajah, and was now advancing with twenty-eight guns he had there captured and 22,000 men, many of them belonging to the drilled troops of the Gwalior contingent, to relieve Jhansee. Sir Hugh Rose, small though his force was, determined that he would not relax his siege operations for a moment. He collected a small covering army and advanced to meet Tantia Topi. The numbers of the enemy were so vastly superior that both flanks were far beyond the English line, and threatened completely to envelope it. Seeing the danger, Sir Hugh Rose attacked each flank with a body of cavalry. Both attacks were successful, and as the wings fell back repulsed, his infantry in the centre rushed to the charge, and the first line of the enemy turned and fled. Tantia Topi

Victory over
Tantia Topi.
April 1.

seems to have seen that the day was lost. He set fire to the jungle, and, under cover of the flames and smoke, withdrew his second line. But the English horse artillery and cavalry dashed through the fire, and the pursuit was not closed till every gun had been taken, and the enemy's force withdrawn beyond the Betwa. The victory was almost immediately followed up by an assault upon the town. The defence was desperate, but the stormers

Jhansee taken.
April 5.

forced their way in, and on the 4th of April the Ranee, despairing of relief, fled to join Tantia Topi at Calpee. During the whole of the siege, under a hot sun, the English troops had never been able to change their clothes. A rest of a fortnight, during which the troops were reorganised, was necessary before the final effort to capture the great rebel stronghold of Calpee could be made. When Sir Hugh Rose resumed his march he found himself opposed at a place called Kunch by Tantia Topi and the indefatigable Ranee. A fresh victory cleared his road to Calpee. This fortress is situated amidst a network of ravines. The bluffs between them had been strongly entrenched. Behind them lay a series of temples which had been turned into fortresses. Behind them again lay the town and the fort. Judging it imprudent to assault it directly, Sir Hugh Rose moved his force to a point a few miles lower down the

river Jumna. The enemy did not wait to be assaulted.

Calpee taken.

After some days passed in skirmishing, they designed a most skilful attack. They determined to take advantage of the ravines, which would entirely screen their movements, and by a feigned attack upon the left draw the English troops in that direction, while, marching in secret through the ravines, the main body was to force

its way along the river-side, fall upon the right, and annihilate it. But Sir Hugh Rose was not deceived. The very formidable assault upon the left did not induce him to withdraw any troops from his right. It was fortunate; for suddenly from their shelter such masses of the enemy appeared that the English were for a while driven back, and it required a charge headed by Sir Hugh himself to check the rebel advance. But once checked, their defeat was complete. The attack on the left ceased when that on the right was defeated, and the enemy not only fell back, but evacuated the town and fortress.

Whitelock had meanwhile with less difficulty completed his march to Banda. The plan laid down appeared to have been carried out in every point. Sir Hugh Rose and the Commander-in-Chief believed the campaign was over; the General even gave up his command and obtained sick-leave. Before he had parted with his troops he was suddenly called again into action. The Ranee had hit upon a scheme of strange audacity which she had induced Tantia Topi and Rao Sahib to embrace. Knowing the difficulty with which Sindia was keeping his post at Gwalior, she pushed forward at once with her beaten army, opened negotiations with the people and troops in the capital, induced them to throw off the allegiance of Sindia, defeated him when he tried to stop her by force of arms, declared Nana Sahib Peishwa, and established herself in Gwalior. Sir Hugh Rose, breaking through all conventionality, resumed his command, determined to reduce the city before the June rains should render fighting impossible. Before he reached it, another English force marching from the southward under Brigadier Smith, had fought and won a battle in which the gallant Ranee had been killed. Dressed as a man, and leading her troopers, she had been carried away with them as they fled, her horse fell with her, and she was cut down. A battle before the walls showed Sir Hugh that he might safely advance, and before the close of the day the city was occupied.

Death of the
Ranee and cap-
ture of Gwalior.
June 19, 1858.

The capture of Calpee and Gwalior, the crowning victories of the great march of Sir Hugh Rose, broke up organised rebellion in Central India, and in those portions of the North-West Provinces which lay on the south of the Jumna. Henceforward the operations in that part of the country consisted of the movements of pursuing columns, directed chiefly to the capture of Tantia Topi. During the whole of the rest of the year, pursued and hunted by several English columns, the great rebel leader moved rapidly to and fro, sometimes advancing

towards the north-west, sometimes appearing in Rajputana, sometimes making his appearance on the Nerbudda, frequently fighting and keeping the insurrection alive. At length, early in the year 1859, he gave up the struggle and went into hiding, and in April was surrendered by the most important of his adherents, Maun Singh.

Results somewhat of the same kind had on the north of the rivers attended the fall of Lucknow. Eager to complete the suppression of the Mutiny, Lord Canning urged the Commander-in-Chief to advance immediately into Rohilcund. Sir Colin Campbell, not without misgivings, yielded to his arguments, and pushed forward at once, leaving Sir Hope Grant in Oude, and despatching Lugard to bring to order the west of Behar, where the skilful tactics of Kunwar Singh were creating a fresh danger. Since its rebellion Rohilcund had owned the rule of a chief, resident at Bareilly, called Khan Bahadur Khan. Upon this capital various columns were to concentrate. One from Roorkee in the extreme north-west, one from the south-west, while the Commander-in-Chief advanced from the south-east. It was hoped that thus the enemy would be driven to one point and finally defeated and destroyed. The expectation was not thoroughly fulfilled. The Moolvee, who had command at Shahjehanpore, on the road to Bareilly, managed to avoid an engagement, and to evacuate the town before the arrival of the English. He even returned to Shahjehanpore when Sir Colin Campbell advanced to Bareilly, and though again compelled to withdraw, afforded no opportunity for a decisive battle. But though thwarted in his attempt at dealing a final blow to the rebellion, Sir Colin Campbell and his lieutenants had by the end of May practically restored Rohilcund to the English rule, and confined the strength of the rebellion to Oude. Any hope of success the rebels may there have had was probably lost when, on the 5th of June, the Moolvee was shot in a quarrel with a native Rajah. Of the three important leaders, by the middle of 1858, Tantia Topi was thus a hunted fugitive, the Moolvee was dead, and the third, Kunwar Singh, alone was keeping up the Mutiny in Western Behar.

But the reduction of Oude had yet to be completed, and Kunwar Singh and his followers to be suppressed—a work which was not concluded till the beginning of the following year. The success of this chief had obliged Sir Colin Campbell, immediately after the capture of Lucknow, to despatch a brigade against him. He had been victorious over Milman at Assemghar,

Death of
Tantia Topi.
April 18, 1859.

Reduction of
Behar and Oude.

and a small force under Lord Mark Kerr which the Governor-General had sent against him from Allahabad had only succeeded in partially checking him. The duty of reducing Behar was intrusted to Lugard, and proved difficult and wearisome. Kunwar Singh constantly evaded decisive battles, and crossing the Ganges found shelter in the vast jungles which surround Jagdespore, his own home. Invariably dispersed when encountered, the rebels immediately re-united, and the whole country swarmed with bands of marauders. It was only by driving roads through the jungle, and by organising a force of mounted riflemen at the suggestion of Sir Henry Havelock, that the country was at length cleared, and by November the rebels destroyed. In the course of the campaign Kunwar Singh had fallen. In the meantime, while Behar was thus being reduced, in October, when active measures again became possible, a number of columns were sent into Oude, and eventually Sir Hope Grant and Sir Colin Campbell succeeded in driving the main bodies of the rebels, and Nana Sahib among them, over the Nepal frontier. But they found no security there. The loyalty of Jung Bahadur allowed the English troops to continue their pursuit within the Nepal territory, where the rebel armies were finally broken up and dispersed.

Although the Mutiny and its attendant revolt had been chiefly confined to the Bengal Presidency, it must not be supposed that the danger had been slight in the other parts of India. The same action which had proved so irritating to the chiefs in the North-West had been at work in the Southern Mahratta country in the Bombay Presidency. What is known as the Inam Commission had carried out the same strict inquiry into titles, as the Revenue Board had set on foot in the North-West Provinces. 35,000 estates, large and small, had been examined by this Commission, and in 21,000 cases sentences of confiscation had been pronounced. The discontent thus excited had shown itself in mutinies and in revolts, and it was only by the excellent government of Lord Elphinstone, and the skill of Mr. Seton Karr and Colonel Jacobson, that a great Mahratta movement which would naturally have centred round Nana Sahib was prevented. The danger was scarcely less in the great Mahomedan territory of the Nizam of Hyderabad. In June and July 1857, conspiracies had been discovered there, insurrection broke out, and the Residency was assaulted. It was not further met and suppressed by Major Davidson. But that it went no further is chiefly due to the consistent loyalty of Salar Jung, the Prime Minister. He was a remarkable man, believing strongly in the

Danger in the
Bombay
Presidency,

and at Hyder-
abad.

possibility of native states being well ruled by natives, but acknowledging the necessity of some such paramount authority as that exercised by the English. It was with his determined support and assistance that Davidson was able to suppress disaffection, and even to employ the Hyderabad contingent to reinforce the army of Sir Hugh Rose, in whose splendid services it bore its full share.

No portion of our history is more full of stirring incident than the Indian Mutiny. At no time did Englishmen exhibit more fully their characteristic tenacity and fertility of resource. At no time, it must be confessed, did they show in more cruel fashion their fixed belief in themselves and in the rightfulness of their cause, and their incapacity for understanding the rights or feelings of those opposed to them. In the grim struggle for life or death conscientious discrimination entirely disappeared. The contest seemed to lie between two savage races capable of no thought but that, regardless of all justice or mercy, their enemies should be exterminated. Deeds of cruelty on one side and the other were perpetrated, over which it is necessary to draw a veil, and a spirit of bloodthirsty recklessness was exhibited, which in calmer times fills the mind with horror. Such was the natural result of the position occupied by the English in India. The rightfulness of the position may well be questioned; but if it be once granted that it is justifiable, then the murderous treachery of the natives, the acute character of the danger to which the English were exposed, the necessity for asserting our supremacy at all hazards, give a satisfactory excuse for all that was done. This was the view which England took. Any cruelty caused by excess of zeal was condoned. No praise was too great to lavish on the splendid work of those who had saved the Empire. Yet the mutineers who were shot from the guns, the hundreds of unarmed Sepoys who were cut to pieces in pursuit, or hanged in cold blood after capture, were brave men fighting after the nature of their kind for a national liberty which they loved, or for a religion in which they devoutly believed.

The Mutiny was still unrepressed when Parliament assembled in February 1858. But the popular feeling that the Indian revolt with all its horrors was traceable to misgovernment was too strong to be restrained. The worst of the crisis appearing to be over, the Ministry felt it necessary to introduce a Bill upon the subject. There was a widespread feeling that one of the chief evils in Indian administration was the double system of government, and it appeared to many a monstrous thing that the rule of so vast a portion of our Empire should be in the hands of a mercantile

✓ Palmerston's
India Bill.
Feb. 12, 1858.

company, even though its powers were largely restrained by the concurrent jurisdiction of a department of the Government. The general voice demanded that the divided authority of Crown and Company should cease, and that the government should be consolidated in the hands of the Crown alone. The Directors of the Company drew up an able petition against the abolition of the Company, pointing out the advantages which had accrued from their government, and claiming credit for their worthy management of India. This view was upheld by those who represented the Indian interest in Parliament. They pointed out that every instance of aggressive policy was due to the coercive influence of Parliament, and not to the will of the Directors; while not a few statesmen of high rank, and among them John Stuart Mill, believed that the withdrawal of the check exercised by the Directors, and the transference of all power and patronage to the Government, would be injurious to the best interests of India, by bringing it at once into the sphere of party politics: "and thus converting the administration of that country into a thing to be scrambled for by the second and third class of English Parliamentary politicians." But in spite of ably supported arguments in this direction, the general sense of the glaring anomalies of the double system, and of the want both of rapid action and direct responsibility which it entailed, was too strong to be resisted. The prevalent feeling found expression in the speech of Sir George Lewis, Chancellor of the Exchequer. All the good deeds of which the Company boasted were, he declared, subsequent to 1784, subsequent, that is, to the time when the Company was subjected to Parliamentary control. The double government begun by Mr. Pitt in that year, perfected by Mr. Dundas in 1793, reduced the Company to complete political subordination. In 1813 their monopoly of trade with India was removed; in 1833 their monopoly of trade with China. Originally a trading company, having accidentally acquired governing powers, the establishment of the Board of Control had reduced them to the condition of subordinate governors retaining their original capacity for trade. On the renewal of their charter in 1833 their powers had been still further diminished, and one-third of the Court of Directors consisted of nominees of the Crown. Thus stripped of its original commercial monopoly, and closely restricted in its powers of government, the Company remained only as a piece of effete and cumbrous machinery serving no end except to hamper the administration. Lord Palmerston thought it necessary therefore to introduce a Bill for transferring the whole government to the Crown.

But he was not destined to carry out the measure : an unexpected defeat drove him from office. On the 14th of January an attempt had been made to assassinate the Emperor of the French. While he was driving with the Empress to the Opera-House, three bombs were thrown under his carriage with such terrible effect that, though he himself escaped unhurt, ten innocent persons were killed, and no less than 156 more or less wounded. The chief of the conspirators was Orsini, an Italian refugee. Naturally the greatest indignation was felt at this cruel and reckless assault, and when it appeared that the plot had been concocted and the bombs made in England, the anger of the French was turned upon their allies, who had allowed such a crime to be hatched undisturbed under the cover of hospitality. On the 20th of January, Count Walewski, the French Foreign Minister, wrote a despatch to the English Ministers, in which in strong words he called attention to what had happened, and while refraining from indicating any particular measure, demanded that "her Majesty's Government should assist in averting a repetition of such guilty enterprises, by affording a guarantee of security, which no state could refuse to a neighbouring state, and which the French were authorised to expect from an ally." In introducing this demand the despatch had asserted that this fresh attempt, like those which preceded it, had been devised in England, and went on to say of the attitude of the demagogues established in England, "it is assassination elevated to a doctrine, preached openly, practised in repeated attempts, the most recent of which has just struck Europe with amazement. Ought then the right of asylum to protect such a state of things? Is hospitality due to assassins? Ought the English legislation to contribute to their designs and their plans? and can it continue to shelter persons who, by their flagrant acts, place themselves beyond the pale of common rights, and under the ban of humanity?" The despatch remained without a written reply. At the same time addresses of congratulation on his escape poured in upon the Emperor, and among others several from the French army. They were couched in most exaggerated and injudicious language. One demanded "an account of the land which contains the haunts of the monsters who are sheltered by its laws. Give us the order, Sire, and we will pursue them even to their strongholds." Another said, "Let the miserable assassins, the subordinate agents of such crimes, receive the chastisement due to their abominable attempts, but let also the infamous haunt in which machinations so infernal are planned (presumably London) be

Orsini attempts
to assassinate
Napoleon.
Jan. 14, 1858.

French anger
turned against
England.

destroyed for ever." Much more importance than they deserved was given to these effusions by their appearance in the official *Moniteur*.

If there is one point on which the English public are sensitive, it is the right of asylum; and the words in Walewski's despatch, although he made no particular demand, seemed certainly to suggest a limitation of that right, while the braggart language of the French officers, endorsed apparently by the French Government, seemed to be an undisguised threat which popular opinion regarded as all the more ungenerous if, as it was supposed, France was seizing the opportunity of our difficulties in India to play the bully. The irritation on both sides of the Channel was very great, and in neither case unreasonable. It is certain, that the extreme freedom with which our hospitality is extended to political offenders, had in this case, as in others, been misused; nor can foreign nations be expected to understand the completeness of individual freedom allowed in England, or to be satisfied with the reply that the Government is answerable only for the maintenance of the municipal law. It seems at all events obvious that if our laws render such crimes as those of Orsini easy, there is something erroneous in them.

While the angry feeling was at its height, Lord Palmerston asked leave to introduce a Bill with regard to conspiracy to murder. It was not a very severe measure. As the law then stood, such conspiracy in England was a misdemeanour only, and punishable by fine and imprisonment. In Ireland it was a capital offence. The Bill proposed to equalise the crime in the two countries, making it in both cases a felony, punishable by transportation or by imprisonment with hard labour, and to apply it to all persons with respect to conspiracies to murder without regard to the place where it was intended that the murder should be committed. The Premier declared that the Cabinet was acting simply on the conviction that our law wanted reform in this respect, and without any reference to the communications from France. But the irritated public saw in the conduct of Lord Palmerston, always supposed to regard France and the French Emperor with undue partiality, a base truckling to the demands of that nation. The failure of the Government to give a definite reply to Walewski's despatch, the introduction of a legal reform by the Premier, instead of by the law officers of the Crown, were regarded as proofs that this was the real character of the proposed Bill. It was explained that the change had nothing to do with the French demands, that a verbal reply had been given to the despatch, that the Emperor had apologised for what he said was

Popular irrita-
tion against
France.

Palmerston
proposes to
amend the
Conspiracy
Law.

the accidental introduction in the *Moniteur* of the truculent addresses of his colonels; and Lord Palmerston very reasonably argued against the petulant rejection of the required improvement merely because our neighbours had allowed themselves to lose their temper. His arguments so far prevailed that leave was given to introduce the Bill by a majority of 200. But the victory was only temporary. Before the introduction on the 14th of February of the second reading of the Bill, the popular feeling had declared itself against it as being entirely inadequate, and merely a sop to allay the anger of the French. Mr. Milner Gibson therefore moved an amendment to the effect that the House regretted that the Government had not felt it their duty to reply to the important despatch of January 20th before introducing any alteration of the Conspiracy laws. That is to say, he expressed the opinion that a definite protest against any infringement of the right of asylum should first have been made, and then any flaw in our municipal law corrected. Disraeli, who had voted for the introduction of the Bill, declaring now that the question was changed, that it lay not between England and France, but between the House and the Government, strongly supported the amendment. The junction of the Tories with the more advanced Liberals secured them a majority, and the amendment was carried against Government by 19 votes. Never unduly tenacious of office, Lord Palmerston at once resigned.

It is of course ridiculous to suppose that such men as Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon, whose fault lay rather in overvaluing the importance of English interests than in overlooking them, should have been guilty of negligence in the maintenance of the English right of asylum. They had a difficult part to play (rendered more difficult by the violence of the Emperor and the French), in at once maintaining the existing alliance, and fully vindicating the dignity of England. The very popular character of the English Parliament, while it renders it a true representative of the national feeling, lays it open to the gusts of temporary passion which are apt to arise in a Democracy. To such a passing burst of feeling Lord Palmerston fell a victim. That his Ministry had in fact acted both judiciously and firmly may be gathered from the admission contained in a letter from Lord Derby to the Queen after Lord Clarendon had spoken in vindication of the outgoing Government. "Lord Clarendon," he writes, "made an admirable speech in explanation of the course which the late Govern-

Popular objections to it.

Palmerston resigns, Feb. 19.

Causes of Palmerston's fall.

ment pursued, and which, had it been delivered in the House of Commons on the subject of the amendment, would probably have deprived Lord Derby of the honour of addressing your Majesty on the present occasion." As a matter of fact, in spite of his personal friendship for the Emperor, Lord Palmerston was always on his guard against him, and fully aware of the inventive and plotting character of his mind. A year or two after this he declared that "the Emperor's mind was as full of schemes as a warren is full of rabbits." But the Anglo-French alliance was undoubtedly very dear to him, and during much of the preceding autumn he had been engaged in negotiations for the purpose of preserving it, in face of the differences of opinion which arose in the two Courts with regard to the treatment of the Danubian Principalities.

In his private conversations Louis Napoleon made no secret of his wish for a general revision of the Treaties of Vienna (in 1815). He regarded them as directed entirely against France, and their maintenance as the established law of Europe as a constant cause of irritation to his people. There can be no doubt that he desired an alteration in the map of Europe, and the extension of French boundaries. He of course knew that such a measure could only be carried out by the consent of the great Powers. And it seems not improbable that the general outline of his policy consisted in a great exhibition of power directed in turn against each rival nation, and the subsequent establishment of friendly relations with it. Circumstances had enabled him to set his scheme on foot by establishing a close alliance with England. He had thus been able to defeat the Russians. But no sooner had his power been shown than, beginning even at the very Peace itself, he had given strong proofs of his willingness to form a close friendship with that country. He listened kindly to the constant stream of friendly flattery which was poured on him by the Russians; he received a visit from the Archdukes; he contemplated a meeting with the Emperor at Berlin. Austria was the country to which it appeared he would next turn his attention, and apply to it the same system as he had employed towards Russia. As already mentioned, his scheming mind contemplated a rearrangement of Europe. He had quite lost all personal interest in the maintenance of the Turkish Empire, but he did not desire that Constantinople should become Russian. He conceived the idea of placing the Principalities under one sovereign, a stranger, in the belief that a Power so placed would act as a sufficient check upon Russian

Napoleon's schemes.

advance. It would, however, obviously have been a step in the direction of the destruction of the Turkish Empire, and would have raised a new force in the immediate neighbourhood of the Austrian Dominions. But the Austrians had of late found the Turks good neighbours, and did not believe in the strength of such a State. They therefore clung closely to the terms of the late Treaty of Paris, by which self-government, under the suzerainty of Turkey was guaranteed to the several Principalities, the Porte undertaking to convoke a representative Divan in each State in which the wishes of the people should be expressed as to their definite organisation. So far had the split between France and Austria gone, that Louis Napoleon had even suggested to England an alliance between England, France, and Russia, from which Austria should be excluded. Whatever the wisdom of the French scheme—and subsequent events seem to show that it was wise—on this point there could at that time be no doubt as to the action of England. The Crimean war with all its losses had been fought for the integrity of Turkey. Austria had played a very substantial part in bringing that war to a successful issue. It was impossible for the English Government to dream of any arrangements which should injure the Turkish Empire, even if its opinion had not coincided exactly with that of Austria as to the necessity of guarding against Russian advance. The elections for the Divan, held in pursuance of the Paris Treaty, had produced a strong majority in favour of the continued separation of the Principalities, and consequently in opposition to the French view. The French did not hesitate to charge the Sultan with manipulating the electoral lists, and, in junction with Russia and Sardinia, threatened to withdraw their ambassador if the elections were not annulled.

Thus it appeared that upon the Eastern question France and Russia were opposed to England and Austria, and that the alliance originally founded for the maintenance of the integrity of Turkey was on the point of dissolution. The friends of the alliance, and it may be the Emperor himself, who could not yet certainly afford to do without England, suggested a personal visit of a private character to be paid by Louis Napoleon to the Queen at Osborne. Thither also Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon went, and in the course of a few days, during which the friendship between the royal families became apparently very sincere, conversations were held with the Ministers, and more effectually still with Prince Albert, and a compromise was arrived at by which the

Visit of
Napoleon to
Osborne.
Aug. 1857.

English consented that the elections should be annulled, while Napoleon agreed to give up the idea of the union of the Provinces.

The final settlement of the government of the Danubian Principalities in the following year was itself a full illustration of Napoleon's views. The Divans elected after the rectification of the electoral lists pronounced definitely and strongly for union, and at the conference of the great Powers held in Paris for the settlement of the question, France, Russia, and Sardinia showed themselves strongly in favour of such an arrangement. It was in vain that Napoleon was reminded of the compact arrived at at Osborne. Although it had been reduced to writing, Walewski had declined to sign it, and it was now practically repudiated. The Conservative Government at this time in office had adopted to the full the policy of maintaining the integrity of Turkey. In spite, therefore, of the efforts of Mr. Gladstone in Parliament to secure what was almost universally acknowledged to be for the advantage of the Principalities themselves, their union under a foreign prince, the English plenipotentiary combined with Austria to press their separation. The result was a sort of compromise which proved entirely delusive. Under a central committee the Principalities (which were to be called the United Principalities) were each to be governed by its own Prince or Hospodar, and its own elective assembly. The institutions for the two Provinces were the same, and the apparent separation speedily disappeared when both elected the same man as their Hospodar. For the time the difficulty was got over. But it was rendered plain to all parties concerned that Napoleon nourished a strong dislike to Austria, that the fundamental basis of the Anglo-French alliance had in fact disappeared, and that from the scheming mind of the Emperor, constant renewals of similar complications must be expected.

Settlement of
Wallachia and
Moldavia.

CHAPTER VII.

LORD DERBY'S MINISTRY, February 28, 1858.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Derby.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Chelmsford.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Salisbury.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Hardwicke.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Disraeli.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Spencer Walpole.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Stanley.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Malmesbury.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Mr. Jonathan Peel.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Sir John Pakington.
<i>President of the Board of Control,</i>	Lord Ellenborough.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Joseph Henley.
<i>First Commissioner of Works,</i>	Lord John Manners.
<i>Postmaster-General,*</i>	Lord Colchester.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,*</i>	Duke of Montrose.

* Not in Cabinet.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Eglinton.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Napier.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Lord Naas.

The following changes subsequently took place:—

<i>President of the Board of Control,</i>	Lord Stanley, May 1858.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, May 1858.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Sotherton Estcourt, March 1859.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Lord Donoughmore, March 1859.

ON Lord Palmerston's resignation, Lord Derby found it possible to form a Ministry and undertake the Government. The management of the House of Commons fell to Mr. Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by his skill the Conservatives were enabled to remain in power till the close of the session in presence of a hostile majority.

The Ministry was at first directly charged with two duties, the destruction of the double government in India, and the formal reply

Lord Derby's
Ministry,
Feb. 28, 1858.

to Count Walewski's despatch. Lord Malmesbury undertook the second of these duties, and called attention to those strong expressions which the French Minister had used, and which, as he said, had not unnaturally been understood to imply not only that the offence complained of was not recognised as such by the English law, and might be committed with impunity, but that the spirit of English legislation is such as designedly to shelter and screen the offender from punishment. To this letter Count Walewski replied emphasising strongly the desire of the French Government to maintain the alliance, and disclaiming all idea of putting undue pressure upon England. "My despatch," he wrote, "of the 20th of January had no other object than to draw attention to a state of things which was to be regretted, but I carefully abstained from expressing any opinion as to the measures calculated to remedy it, and I have been unable to understand how certain expressions of that despatch have been so misunderstood. As the intentions of the Emperor have been misapprehended, his Majesty's Government will abstain from continuing a discussion, which, from being prolonged, might prejudice the dignity and good understanding of the countries, and he appeals purely and simply to the loyalty of the English people." On the receipt of this despatch, Mr. Disraeli declared in Parliament that the threatened discord between the two countries had been got over, and the incident closed. The alliance was yet too valuable to the French Government to allow of its being broken by an outburst of popular temper, so long, at all events, as the Emperor could hold it in restraint.

This question was scarcely settled when the Government proceeded to its second task, and produced what is known as the India Bill No. 2. It proved a complete failure. Like the Bill of Lord Palmerston, it established for the Government of India a President with the rank of Secretary of State, and a Council, but the Council was to consist of fifteen instead of eight members, all of whom were intended to be in some way representative men. Half were to be nominated, but each man was to be drawn from some particular class. The other half were to be elected, some by all men in England who had served the Government for ten years in India, or who were proprietors of a certain amount of Indian railways or stock; the rest were to be elected by the Parliamentary constituencies of London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Belfast; a qualification based upon residence in India or upon trade with that country, was also required for the members elected. Leave was given to bring

Reply to
Walewski's
despatch.

Failure of
India Bill
No. 2.

in the Bill though there were very slight signs of approval, and the Easter recess was allowed for its consideration. During that time it became evident that it was entirely distasteful to the nation. It was marked by a misplaced ingenuity which robbed it of the simple character requisite in so important a measure; and it was very generally felt that the introduction of election by Parliamentary constituencies of members to represent not them, but the interests of Calcutta and Bombay, was an entire misapprehension of the principles of representation, and a mere piece of clap-trap for the purpose of winning Liberal votes. When the Bill was brought in after the recess, there appeared to be no chance whatever of its being passed, or of the Ministry avoiding a great and fatal defeat. But as a mere piece of party tactics, it might well be doubted whether the defeat of Government would have been advisable. The fall of Lord Palmerston's administration had been brought about by the disorganisation of the Liberal party, by the disagreement of its chief leaders, Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, and by the mistrust felt by the more advanced section of Liberals, both as to the foreign policy and reforming tendencies of Lord Palmerston. There was nothing in the present question which could afford a solid basis for reorganisation.

From a higher point of view, as all parties in the House were on the whole agreed as to the necessity of the proposed change in the Indian government in some shape or other, it was, as Lord Palmerston said, far too serious a matter to be made the shuttlecock of political parties. Under these circumstances, instead of driving the Government to extremity, Lord John Russell proposed to proceed by way of resolution, that is to say, that the principles should be discussed and settled in the House, and that a Bill which would thus become the joint production of all parties, based upon the decisions arrived at, should then be introduced. As a matter of course the Chancellor of the Exchequer sprang eagerly at the opportunity of avoiding defeat, so eagerly indeed as to cause some amusement in the House. He went so far as to propose that Lord John Russell should himself bring in the resolutions. But as it was generally felt that the responsible Ministry should undertake this duty, Mr. Disraeli expressed his willingness to produce them himself, and a few days later proceeded to do so. After considerable discussion a Bill which, under the circumstances, was necessarily something of a compromise between the two preceding Bills, was passed. The territories and powers of the East India Company were to be vested in the Queen; her sovereignty was to be exercised through one of her

Unanimity of parties on the principle of the Bill.

principal Secretaries of State, assisted by a council of fifteen members, of whom seven were to be elected by the Court of Directors from their own body, and eight nominated by the Crown. Appointments to the Civil Service were to be thrown open, and to be filled by competitive examination. The same system was to be applied to the engineers and artillery. The Indian revenues were not to be applied to defray the expenses of military operations outside India. Orders directing the commencement of a war in India were to be communicated within three months to Parliament if sitting, if not sitting within a month of its next meeting. All the Provinces of India were to be placed under the authority of the Governor-General, henceforward to be called the Viceroy, but at the same time were to retain their own civil government. The change was proclaimed in India in the following November, and Lord Canning assumed the title of Viceroy.

The passage of this very important Bill had been interrupted by an incident which had nearly overthrown the Ministry. It involved the policy pursued by Lord Canning upon the suppression of the Mutiny. Almost immediately upon the capture of Lucknow, he had issued a proclamation in which he had declared the whole of the land of Oude, with the exception of that held by six proprietors, forfeited to the Crown, which would dispose of it as it thought fit. Life was secured to all landowners at once surrendering to the Chief Commissioner, provided that their hands were unstained by English blood murderously shed: for any further indulgence they were to throw themselves upon the mercy and justice of the British Government. This appeared to many men, and among others to Sir James Outram, far too stringent a measure of confiscation. In his view it entailed the certainty of an endless guerilla warfare. He did not in fact understand Lord Canning's intentions. The Governor-General was far from meaning to deprive any large number of landowners of their property. But he wished to establish once for all a clear groundwork, freed from all complications arising from previous circumstances, for the reorganisation of the conquered Province. He so far yielded to Outram's objections that he introduced into the Proclamation, as actually published, a clause announcing that liberal indulgence would be extended to those who came speedily forward in support of order. A copy of the original Proclamation without the added clause was sent to England, but was followed almost immediately by a private letter to Mr. Vernon Smith, at that time head of the Board of Control,

The India Bill passed Aug. 3.

Excitement caused by Canning's proclamation of March 3.

explaining Lord Canning's views with regard to it. When this letter reached England the change of Ministry had taken place, and while the Proclamation passed as a State paper into the hands of Lord Ellenborough, the new President of the Board, the letter was unwisely kept in Mr. Smith's hands. Without the key the Proclamation in all its apparent severity struck Lord Ellenborough in the same light in which it had struck Sir James Outram. Unfortunately, the new President was a man fond of showy writing, and of exertions of authority. He wrote a despatch through the secret committee of the Company to Lord Canning, in which, in very bitter words, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the policy he was pursuing. Such a despatch should certainly not have been written to a man of Lord Canning's position and well-known clemency. But the matter became much worse when the obnoxious language was published, and Lord Canning, in the midst of his extraordinary difficulties, found himself disowned and reprimanded by the home authorities. The outcry raised against Lord Ellenborough was so great that he was compelled to save the Government by sending in his resignation (May 13). Even this did not prevent Mr. Cardwell from bringing forward a motion of censure. But when the suppression of the private letter became known, and it was understood that in the Proclamation when issued a merciful clause, which Lord Ellenborough had not seen, had been introduced, it was felt that there was so much to be urged in favour of the President's view, that the ill-cemented union of sections which would have supported Mr. Cardwell fell to pieces, and the assault upon Government collapsed.

The session was rendered further remarkable by the final settlement of the long-vexed question as to the admission of the Jews to seats in the House. Lord John Russell, brought in a Bill for altering the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, for the purpose of relieving the Jews from the necessity of using certain words in the oath, and in spite of some warm opposition the clause relative to the Jews was carried by a large majority. The Bill, however, met its usual reception in the House of Lords. It was amended by the omission, upon the motion of the Lord Chancellor, Chelmsford, of the clause which admitted the Jews to the advantages of the Bill. As the Commons refused to accept this amendment, a dispute between the Houses seemed likely, when happily Lord Lucan hit upon a compromise, and suggested that a Bill should be introduced allowing either House by its resolution to modify the form of the oath required from its own members. Ten times since

Admission of
the Jews to
Parliament.
July.

1833 the Bill had been sent to the Upper House, and been rejected. It did not seem prudent to resist longer, and the Government expressed their assent to the compromise. A Bill in accordance with it was therefore rapidly passed, and on the 26th of July Baron Rothschild took his seat for the City of London.

The Government had successfully passed through one session, yet the majority of the House was in opposition to it, and its lengthened tenure of office was impossible unless it could find some means of changing this state of affairs.

Disraeli's
Reform Bill.
Feb. 1859.

The great events of the last few years had drawn the public mind a good deal away from domestic questions, and had brought into office that section of the Liberals which shared Lord Palmerston's dislike to further progress in Parliamentary reform. But as the comparative success of the Crimean war, the close of the little wars in Persia and China, and the suppression of the Mutiny had removed for the time questions of a more wide and imperial character, activity in domestic politics had again arisen. The Conservative Government, well aware that the reformers were little pleased with the way in which the Whigs had treated their favourite question, and calculating upon the division between the parties of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, hoped to secure the majority which they required by themselves undertaking to bring in a Reform Bill. The opportunity was a good one, and a sound and simple Bill might have answered their expectations. But when on the 28th of February Mr. Disraeli introduced his measure, it proved to contain fanciful arrangements which to the scrutinising eyes of the Opposition, seemed to be directed to the sole object of securing a Conservative majority. What was new in the Bill was the extension of the franchise to the possessors of personal property; £10 a year in the funds, £60 in the savings-bank, pensions of £20 a year were to give the right of voting, which was to be extended also to graduates, ministers of religion, lawyers, and doctors. At the same time the £10 household franchise was to be extended to the counties. For the purpose the Conservatives had in view the Bill was an unwise one. It was at once too wide and too narrow. Its introduction was immediately followed by the resignation of two of the Ministers (Mr. Henley and Mr. Walpole). And Lord John Russell, seeing his opportunity, proposed a resolution reprobating on the one hand the interference with the old principle of freehold franchise, and on the other the maintenance of the high qualification in cities and boroughs. This resolution was very skilfully drawn, so as to unite all classes of opponents to the Bill, and after a debate rendered memorable by the

great speeches of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, and Mr. Cairns, Solicitor-General, the division showed that the Government were in a minority of thirty-nine in one of the fullest Houses on record. Called to office under peculiar circumstances, and in a Parliament elected while they were in Opposition, the Government did not think it necessary at once to resign, but determined to appeal to the constituencies. The result did not answer their expectations, although their ranks were somewhat strengthened.

The Ministry defeated. March 31, 1859. On the reassembling of Parliament a vote of want of confidence was moved, and carried by a majority of thirteen. The Ministry had no choice now but to resign.

It was not a very easy matter to supply their place. The disorganisation of the Liberal party, and the discord existing between its two acknowledged heads had been the cause of the success of the Conservatives. Unless the discord could be healed, a strong Liberal Government could not be formed. Aware of this, the Liberal party had succeeded in bringing about a reconciliation between its leaders. Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston had promised to come to an agreement that whichever of the two was charged with the formation of a Government, should have the co-operation of the other. But the

Granville fails to form a Ministry. Queen, not perhaps aware of the arrangement, and feeling, as she said, that it was highly invidious to choose between such eminent statesmen, intrusted Lord Granville with the formation of a Ministry, hoping to enlist both the rivals under his banner. His negotiations were not successful, and the choice fell on Lord Palmerston, who succeeded in forming a remarkably strong Ministry, although the determination of Lord John Russell to hold the Foreign Office deprived it of the assistance of Lord Clarendon.

Need of a strong Ministry because of foreign affairs. It was a time when a strong Ministry was very necessary, for the affairs of Europe were full of difficulty, and war between France and Austria had already broken out. It was the bursting of a storm which had been long brewing. In his desire to revise the Vienna Treaties and make alterations in the arrangements of Europe, the Emperor had naturally turned his attention to the state of Italy. He probably was really anxious for the freedom of that country. It afforded, moreover, the best ground on which to give effect to his long-rankling dislike of Austria. Either by direct possession as in Venetia or Lombardy, or through the instrumentality of the Grand Dukes, the Austrian influence was paramount through a large portion of the Peninsula, and was employed in the disastrous maintenance of bad government, and in

the repression of the sentiment of national independence and unity which had taken possession of the Italians.

Since the battle of Novara in 1849, Sardinia, which had placed itself at the head of the national movement, had continually grown in strength and power. Firmly adhering to constitutional government, under the wise management of Cavour and the honest and straightforward policy of King Victor Emmanuel, it had forced itself into a place of some importance in Europe. It had fought beside the Western Powers in the Crimea, and had taken the opportunity of the Conferences which led to the Peace of Paris, to lay before Europe the claims and aspirations of Italy. Though peace was as yet unbroken, there was every sign that sooner or later the question between Sardinia and Austria must be settled by war. Assisted by large subscriptions from the rest of Italy, the fortress of Alessandria had been fully armed. The fortifications of other strong places had been pressed forward. At Spezzia a great naval armament had been created. And in 1857 diplomatic relations between the two Courts, which had been renewed after the Peace of Paris, were again broken off. Steadily opposing the more violent efforts of Mazzini and the Republicans, Cavour had led all the moderate Liberals of Italy to look with longing hope to the establishment of a constitutional kingdom under the Sardinian House. Conscious that single-handed the risk of attacking the Austrian power was greater than he could wisely run, he had found, as he believed, a firm supporter in the French Emperor. The attempt of Orsini threatened for the instant to ruin this hope. It was supposed that it was principally in anger at the Emperor's delay, and at the obstacles he was thought to raise to the free development of Italy that the assassination had been contrived. Orsini was undoubtedly one of the Republican refugees from Rome. The Emperor caused a very sharp despatch to be sent to Sardinia demanding (what he could only suggest to England) a change in their law, for the protection of foreign rulers. The misunderstanding, which might easily have interrupted the friendship of France and Sardinia, was removed by a straightforward autograph letter from Victor Emmanuel. It is even possible that Orsini's attempt, abortive though it was, furthered the cause for which he died. Certain of his letters which came into the Emperor's hands are said to have added fresh life to his vacillating desires for Italian freedom. He was further moved by his desire to withdraw the French garrison from Rome. In conjunction with the Austrians, his troops were upholding the

Growth of Sardinia.

Alliance between Sardinia and France.

Pope against the change of government ardently desired by the Roman people. But the advice, which he thought himself justified under the circumstances in pressing upon the Pope, was disregarded, and the influence of Austria seemed paramount. He was weary of supporting a Court where he was unable to make his voice fully heard. He demanded a private interview with Cavour, which took place in July at Plombières. It would seem that he went even beyond the

*Secret Treaty
at Plombières.
July 1858.*

hopes of the Italian Minister. Cavour still looked forward to a peaceful diplomatic settlement, but he did not feel himself justified in refusing the powerful assistance which the Emperor offered him, and an arrangement was arrived at by which the Emperor agreed to give armed assistance to Sardinia in the case of a just war.

The arrangement was kept entirely secret even from the Emperor's own Ministers. But indications observed by diplomatists during the autumn led to a feeling that war was imminent. According to the Emperor's calculations, and for the furtherance of his fixed idea of a changed Europe, the time was propitious. He believed, and the flattering professions of friendship which had been lavished on him justified his belief, that he might count upon the support of Russia, especially as the conduct of Austria in the Crimean war, and at the subsequent Treaty, was still rankling in the mind of the Czar. The jealousy existing between Prussia and Austria as rival claimants to the first place in Germany seemed to promise at least the neutrality of Prussia; while with regard to England the well-known sympathy existing there with the national movement in Italy, seemed to secure to him the complete if not enthusiastic restoration of that close alliance which late events had so severely shaken. Europe was warned that the critical moment had arrived when, at the reception of the Ministers on New Year's Day 1859, Louis Napoleon roughly informed the Austrian Ambassador that the relations between the countries were exceedingly bad. And the line the war would take was indicated when on the 10th of January, at the opening of the Sardinian Chambers, the King informed his Parliament that the greatness of the position he had gained was not exempt from perils, for while respecting treaties, he was not insensible to the cry of suffering which reached him from so many parts of Italy.

The diplomatic world was at once thrown into a state of excitement. The well-known ideas of Napoleon, and the profound mistrust felt in him, caused his words to be heard with the greatest

alarm. Excited by his own ambition, and, as it was generally believed, by the necessity of upholding his position at home by an active foreign policy, it appeared only too probable that the first infraction of the Vienna Treaties might easily lead, if successful, to a corresponding effort to secure the Rhine frontier, and bring with it a great European war. But the Emperor found that the calculations on which he had relied were ill-founded. The Prussian King had just been compelled by failing intellect to give place to his brother. The change of ruler had brought with it a change of Ministry and policy. Men of more liberal and wider views had been called to the Government. The Russian influence had been largely removed, and Prussia took up a national position, laying aside for a while its Austrian jealousies. The Conservative Government of England strongly supported by the Court, regarded it as impossible in any way to encourage an uncalled-for assault upon an old ally such as Austria, and the late ill-feeling called out by the events accompanying the Orsini plot proved for a while too strong for Italian sympathy. Discovering his mistake, the Emperor cast about at all events ostensibly for means of withdrawing from his difficult position. He continued to declare his peaceful intentions. He denied that he was placing his army on a war footing. He allowed, nay even urged, the English to despatch Lord Cowley as a mediator to the Austrian Court. Yet as so frequently happened in his career, he was weak and undecided at the moment when called to give active effect to the schemes he had been long pondering. In the present instance there was a whip held over him constantly pressing him forward. Cavour possessed the written agreement of Plombières, and threatened if he were deserted to publish it, and ruin the Emperor's credit both at home and abroad. Thus at the very time that Lord Cowley was engaged at his suggestion in attempting to bring about a peaceful arrangement at Vienna, he induced Russia to propose that a Congress should be summoned, that Congress which in one form or other he had so persistently demanded for the rearrangement of European boundaries. The advantage of this Congress to Napoleon, apart from any territorial arrangements which might be discussed in it, lay in this, that if it should come to any conclusion as to the state of Italy, he could plead the mandate of Europe as an excuse for eluding his engagement at Plombières; if, as seemed likely, Austria should make some mistake, or exhibit irritation in some breach of the peace, his hands would be untied, and he might proceed, without being open to blame, to support his Italian ally.

*Napoleon
hopes to elude
his difficulties
by a Congress.*

In spite of the risk that such a Congress might involve a revision of existing treaties, such as the Treaty of Paris, the desire for peace induced the great Powers of Europe to consent to its being summoned. But there were still great difficulties in its way. Austria, not wholly averse to war, and determined that if the Congress was called her own position should not be injured by it, insisted upon two points,—that Sardinia should disarm, and that the representatives of the Italian States should be excluded. Cavour rejected the suggestion made to him by England to disband his troops on these terms; and, when a proposal of a general disarmament was made, France only accepted it upon the condition that the Italian States should send their plenipotentiaries to the Congress. At length England arrived at a compromise which it was thought might be acceptable: that there should be “a previous, immediate, effective, and simultaneous disarmament” on the part of Austria, France, and Sardinia, the carrying out of which should be intrusted to certain commissioners; that

Failure of the Congress.

immediately on the commissioners beginning their work the Congress should be convened, and the Italian States invited to send representatives. As far as the disarmament went, the great Powers agreed to these terms, and, as the suggestion came backed by the universal voice of Europe, Cavour yielded. But on the other point, the admission of Italian representatives, Austria was unmoved. As, therefore, the Congress appeared impossible, on the very day on which Cavour had announced his assent to disarmament the Austrian Court took the matter into its own hands, and despatched a peremptory summons demanding the immediate disbandment of the Sardinian troops. As a matter of course Cavour refused the

*War breaks out.
April 1859.*

demand, and ten days later the Austrian army crossed the Ticino. Napoleon's hope was fulfilled, Austria had saved him from his awkward predicament; he was free to assist an ally thus attacked, and on the 30th of April the French troops entered Turin.

The hasty conduct of the Austrian Court immediately changed the current of public opinion; and it was to the belief that the late Conservative Government had been playing into the hands of Austria, that the success of the Liberals in the election completed the last day of May must be largely attributed; yet the charge was ill-founded. In the midst of the extraordinary confusion Lord Derby's Government had followed a consistent and not unwise course. The policy of Louis Napoleon was so tortuous, the mistrust in his ulterior designs so reasonable, and the danger to be apprehended from a great Euro-

pean war so terrible, that no Government can be blamed for using all its endeavours to preserve untouched those treaties which, broken though they had been, still formed the only groundwork for the settlement of Europe. If the Ministry is open to any blame they must share it with English statesmen of all parties, and with most of the leaders of public opinion in every European question which has arisen of late years. They miscomprehended the forces actually at work in Europe, and devoted their energies to a well-meaning but erroneous effort to force back that spirit of nationality which they should have recognised as the moving spring of foreign politics.

Real object of the war.

CHAPTER VIII.

LORD PALMERSTON'S MINISTRY, June 1859.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Palmerston.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Campbell.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Granville.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Duke of Argyll.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Gladstone.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir George Lewis.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Duke of Newcastle.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord John Russell.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Mr. Sidney Herbert.
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Sir Charles Wood.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Duke of Somerset.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Milner Gibson.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Lord Elgin.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Sir George Grey.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Carlisle.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Brady.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Mr. Cardwell.

The following changes took place in August 1861 :—

<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir George Grey.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Sir George Lewis.
<i>Postmaster-General</i>	Lord Stanley of Alderley.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Mr. Cardwell.
<i>Lord Chancellor of Ireland,</i>	Lord Westbury.
<i>Chief Secretary of Ireland,</i>	Sir Robert Peel.

In April 1864, Mr. Cardwell became Colonial Secretary, and Lord Clarendon Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

THE consolidation of the Liberal Party produced a ministry of most unusual strength, if strength is to be estimated by the ability of the individual ministers. It is possible, however, that this very ability may be a source of weakness rather than of strength. Able men have wills and opinions of their own, and for the passage of great measures a Cabinet ready to acknowledge the complete supremacy of a great Premier is

likely to be more effective than one in which each individual feels a right to uphold his own particular view. The head of such a ministry should be a man of unusual tact and readiness of resource, so to mould the measures brought before the Cabinet as to attract support rather than to afford room for criticism and opposition. Of necessity the work of such a Cabinet under such a leader will be somewhat conservative and somewhat colourless, and its excellences show themselves rather in good administration than in striking legislation. It is thus that the duration of this last Cabinet of Lord Palmerston's long life was distinctly a time of domestic quiet, during which national desires were allowed to grow, but their execution was kept in abeyance till the death of the popular and skilful manager broke the chain which bound together the somewhat discordant elements of the Ministry, and allowed, after a short interval of Opposition, a reconstituted Liberal Party to take possession of the Government and give vigorous expression to the silent growths of the preceding period. The most important member of the Ministry, setting aside the Premier, was Lord John Russell, whose long and consistent career as an advanced Whig gave great weight to his counsels. His name was so indissolubly connected with parliamentary reform, that although he had at one time declared his belief in the final character of the Reform Bill of 1832, his position in the Ministry seemed to afford security that the constantly recurring claims of the reformers would not be neglected. He was, however, essentially a Whig, and not a Radical. The more advanced party looked for the support of their objects to Mr. Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Originally a Conservative, he had formed one of the small band of able men who had followed Sir Robert Peel, and was now devoting himself to the development of the financial schemes of his teacher. His unrivalled mastery of details, and a commanding eloquence which could invest even dry financial statements with interest, peculiarly fitted him for this work. But it was not in the sphere of finance alone that the progressive character of his mind, and the unflagging power of growth which characterised it, made itself felt. Already it was clear that upon many important points he was inclining to accept the Radical creed. It was perhaps his deeply sympathetic character, his rapid comprehension and appreciation of the various points of view from which a question may be regarded, which were the chief source of Mr. Gladstone's influence. He possessed in an extraordinary degree the power of returning to his audience, elaborated and beautified, their own ideas,—and the press rendered

that audience co-extensive with the nation. It was this gift which made him a great democratic statesman. The immature and formless will of the people constantly found in him an exponent of unequalled power, and received from his genius and earnestness the form and life which was necessary for its realisation. But as yet, sitting as he did as the representative of the University of Oxford, somewhat hampered by his old connections and his former utterances, it was only in his financial measures, and in the occasional expression of opinion not reduced to action, that his democratic fire was visible. Thus it happened that the conservative element in the Cabinet, with its determined policy of inaction, was entirely predominant. The acquiescence of the nation in the temporary cessation of active progress was caused in a great degree by the peculiar feeling with which Lord Palmerston was regarded. His courage and light-heartedness, his good-humoured readiness to receive and return the blows of his political enemies, even his very failings, his prejudices, his self-assertion, were so thoroughly English that they rendered him the most popular of Ministers. The mingled respect and liking with which the veteran statesman was regarded induced even ardent reformers to submit to his quiet authority, and to postpone more active measures till age, which was rapidly creeping on him, should compel him to retire from political life.

Perhaps an even more efficient reason for the comparative immobility of domestic legislation is to be found in the great interest of the events which were happening outside the country, attracting of necessity the popular attention away from the country itself, and in the remarkable series of financial measures, which seemed, in their success and in the constant increase of revenue which accompanied them, to set even the most untoward conditions at defiance. Absorbed in the great events going on around it, satisfied with its own growth in material prosperity, the nation was for a time willing to let well alone. But it must not be supposed that the life of progress was checked because it did not show itself in public acts. On all the great subjects which were subsequently to make their appearance as the critical questions of the time—national education, the position of the Church, the relation between capital and labour, compulsory temperance, the rights and wrongs of Ireland, and Parliamentary reform,—public opinion was gradually forming; and the spirit of improvement, checked for a while, was becoming only the stronger from its temporary repression, and was

Interest absorbed in foreign affairs.

ready to burst out in full vehemence when the opportunity should arrive.

But conservative or not in its tendencies, it was impossible for a Cabinet which had made its way to power by the rejection of the Reform Bill of its opponents to avoid attempting to produce a more satisfactory one of its own, and Lord John Russell, who was thoroughly in earnest on this point, early in the Session (March 1) asked leave to bring in such a Bill. It contrasted strongly in its simplicity with the varied and fanciful measure of the late Government. It proposed that an occupation franchise of £10 should be introduced in the counties, that the borough franchise should be lowered to £6, that some 25 boroughs should be partially disfranchised and the vacant seats thus procured distributed among county divisions and larger boroughs. The only new principle contained in the Bill was the representation of minorities in those places which returned three members. But the Bill excited no enthusiasm either within the House or without. The Premier, who would undoubtedly have been glad to allow the question of Parliamentary reform to drop entirely from his programme, absented himself studiously from the House during the debates. The Conservatives had recourse to their old tactics, and threatened to introduce a vast number of amendments in Committee. The Session was drawing to a close without any settlement of the question; and when it appeared that an amendment by Mr. Mackinnon would be carried to postpone consideration of the Bill till after the new census, which, it was argued, would give a better basis of calculation, Lord John Russell, pleading the lateness of the season, withdrew the Bill (June 11); nor did the Government again attempt to grapple with the question. Several times during its long continuance, private members made motions leading to reform, but the Cabinet, encouraged by the general apathy of the nation, was contented to carry on the current business without further efforts at legislation on a large scale.

From this inaction may be excepted the vigorous efforts of Sir Richard Bethell, subsequently Lord Westbury, at reforming the law. He began, as Attorney-General, by introducing a Bill for the improvement of the Bankruptcy Laws, including the appointment of a Chief Judge in bankruptcy so that this branch of the law might be self-contained, and for the removal of the distinction between bankruptcy and insolvency. The Bill met with great opposition, especially from the lawyers in the Upper House, who insisted upon expunging from

Failure of Russell's Reform Bill.

the Bill what its author had considered as its most important advantage, the creation of the Chief Judgeship. The amendments of the Lords were rejected by the Commons. But on the suggestion of the Attorney-General, who was anxious that his Bill should not be wholly ruined, a compromise was offered by which the Chief Judgeship was retained. But even this was overruled by the Upper House, and rather than lose the whole advantage of his work, Bethell persuaded the Commons to accept the Bill mutilated as it was. His next measure was the solidification of the Statute Law with regard to criminals. Obsolete and useless Acts of Parliament were expunged, and contradictions removed. But, as Lord Chancellor, Lord Westbury aimed at a much greater and more complete process. He projected the examination and compression of the whole Statute Law, by which he hoped to reduce forty-four folio volumes of Acts of Parliament to ten. And even greater than this was his proposal that an attempt should be made to consolidate and codify the common or unwritten law. Common law consists of a vast number of recorded judicial decisions contained in some 1200 volumes of reports. It was suggested that these should be divided into three sections according to their dates, and thoroughly sifted by competent persons. The Lord Chancellor was unfortunately unable himself to carry on his great scheme. His sharp tongue and sarcastic manner had always rendered him unpopular. Some appointments, in making which he had no doubt been culpably careless, were seized upon with avidity as means of attack. In July 1865 a majority in the House of Commons supported a vote of censure against him, charging him with "a laxity of practice, and a want of caution whereby great encouragement had been given to corrupt practices, and conduct which, even in the absence of any improper motive, was highly reprehensible, and calculated to throw discredit upon the administration of the high offices of state." Lord Westbury naturally thought it necessary under such circumstances to resign, and after an explanation of great dignity, in which he claimed credit for the measures of reform he had proposed, and regretted that he was unable to inaugurate the great measure he had at heart, the formation of a digest of the whole law, he laid down the seals, leaving his unfinished work to his successor.

Change in the
Government
of India.

The Reform Bill was not the only legacy which Lord Palmerston's Government had inherited from its predecessor, and if the Ministry showed no earnest endeavour to carry out the one, no such blame can be attached to the able

administration of Sir Charles Wood with regard to the other. The destruction of the double Government in India proposed by Lord Palmerston's Government at the close of the Mutiny had been carried out during the short administration of Lord Derby. The change was practically a slight one. The power of the Company had already become so nominal that its entire disappearance was a matter rather of words than of facts, yet it involved important questions, and had at least the effect of bringing Indian affairs more prominently before the mind of the public. Its finance, its army, its judicial system, became in turn the subject of great anxiety and warm discussion.

The balance between receipts and expenditure had been nearly attained in the year before the Mutiny. A deficit of £170,000 seemed immaterial, especially as much of the outlay was on public works from which a subsequent return might be expected. But the Mutiny upset all calculations. The year 1857-1858 showed a deficiency of £9,000,000, and the following year a deficiency of £12,000,000; so that even without taking into consideration the compensation claimed for the loss of private property during the Mutiny, the two terrible years had left a deficit of not less than £21,000,000. It was felt not unnaturally to be a question whether India was still to remain entirely separate from the English Exchequer or not, and whether the deficiency existing in its revenue could be supplied wholly from its own resources. Lord Stanley, the Indian Secretary of Lord Derby's Government, without proposing any change in the existing system, which had been to charge the Indian debt on the Indian Exchequer only, hinted in no obscure words that as three-fifths of that debt was held by Europeans and English capitalists, it was a matter of doubt whether it would be possible to continue the separation. The revenue of India had not the same elastic character as the English revenue. It arose from land, and could therefore increase only as new land was cultivated, a slow and uncertain process, or by additions of territory which no man desired; from opium, a precarious and variable source; from salt; and from a few customs duties. The mercantile classes were therefore as a whole scarcely taxed, and thus increased prosperity had little influence upon the revenue. The remaining resource—lessened expenditure—seemed scarcely possible if the present large armaments were to be maintained. For the present all that Lord Stanley suggested was the authorisation of a loan to India of £7,000,000. The loan was granted, but it was obviously only a temporary expedient, and the duty of bringing the finances into order was left

Efforts at
reform of the
Indian revenue.

to Lord Palmerston's administration, and to Sir Charles Wood as Indian Secretary. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1859, Mr. James Wilson was appointed financial member of the Legislative Council of India, charged with the duty of attempting an equalisation of income and expenditure. Such a plan he matured, and produced before the Governor-General's Council in India. His scheme included an increase of taxes, a graduated tax upon traders, and an income-tax. His propositions received general approval, but Sir Charles Trevelyan, at that time Governor of Madras, believing that the balance might be obtained by reduction of expenditure, without new taxation, wrote and published a minute to that effect. The publication of such a document could not but be regarded as an act of insubordination, and much as they valued Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Government thought it necessary to recall him, only however to send him out a few years later as financial Minister, with the opportunity of carrying out his own views. Reductions in expenditure, especially in military expenditure, proved possible. £6,800,000 had been withdrawn from this item before the middle of 1861; and conscientious efforts continuing to be directed to financial reform, in 1864 Sir Charles Trevelyan was able at length to show a surplus. The additional taxes had little to do with this result. The proceeds of the tax on traders proved quite insignificant, and the income-tax was so distasteful to the inhabitants of India, that at last Lord Northbrook, during his Vice-royalty (in 1872), thought it better to abolish it. It has been chiefly by means of retrenchment that any advance has been made towards producing a well-balanced Indian Budget.

In close connection with the efforts to bring the finances of India into order was the reorganisation of the army. The suppression of the Company had implied that the Indian army should be taken over by the Government. The feeling against this change of masters was so strong, and was exhibited in so insubordinate a manner, that many of the European regiments were broken up. The movement was so general as to be spoken of as the white mutiny. It became a question whether it was desirable to keep up a local army as distinguished from the Queen's army. The old Indian servants who formed the Council in London, and of whom Sir John Lawrence was one, were strongly in favour of preserving the local force. But Sir Charles Wood, probably with better judgment, overruled their opinion, and determined that the armies should be amalgamated, and the distinction between Indian troops and Queen's troops abolished. At the same time, however, a large native

Reorganisation
of the Indian
army.

force was still maintained, officered by men volunteering for permanent service in India.

It has been mentioned that the inaction of the Government in domestic legislation was partly caused by the distraction of public attention in foreign affairs. Among these may be reckoned the disturbed condition of Europe, wars and rumours of wars in the East, and the great American contest with its attendant results on English trade.

Interest in
foreign
politics.

Lord Palmerston had entered upon office in the midst of the Italian war, and his sympathies were entirely with the French Emperor as he pursued his successful march from Montebello to Solferino. It seemed as though he would fulfil the programme with which he had started, and would "sweep the Austrians from the North of Italy up to the Adriatic." But Napoleon himself had no intention of thus completing his work. There is no doubt that he found his difficulties greater than he at first expected. The resistance of the Austrians had been firm, and the losses of his army proportionately large. The four great fortresses known as the Quadrilateral lay still before him. The attitude of Prussia and Germany was threatening, and even Russia, which had told him that it could not unmoved see Austria come victorious from the war, displayed no alacrity in assisting in the defeat of that Power. Moreover, the time had come for Napoleon to repeat with regard to Austria the game he had already played with Russia, and purchase by a show of generosity the friendship of his conquered rival. He applied to England, urging the Ministers to suggest an armistice. The terms he proposed were the cession of Lombardy to Sardinia, and the establishment of Venetia as a separate State under an Archduke. But Lord Palmerston declined to be used as a cat's-paw to enable the Emperor to escape from his difficulties. Venetia was not yet conquered, and it was not likely that Austria would yield it without a further struggle; and as the Premier wrote to Lord John Russell, "the scheme throws wholly out of the question the wishes of the Italians themselves, and we are asked to propose to the belligerents a parcelling out of the nations of Italy as if we had any authority to dispose of them." Napoleon had therefore to find his own way out of the difficulty, and on the 8th of July 1860 an armistice was concluded, and a meeting arranged with the Emperor of Austria. It was held at Villafranca on the 11th. The agreement arrived at was even less advantageous to Italy than that which Lord Palmerston had rejected. Lombardy was to be given up, but the

Napoleon's war
in Italy.

Duchies were to be restored to their late rulers ; and Venetia, still remaining a part of the Austrian Empire, was to become one of a confederation of Italian States under the Presidency of the Pope. There seems to have been some sort of verbal arrangement that the restoration of the Dukes was not to be effected by force. The preliminaries thus sketched were to be completed at Zurich. The armistice was a terrible blow to the well-wishers of Italy. Cavour at once resigned. Lord Palmerston expressed his deep disapprobation of the terms in a strong letter addressed to Count Persigny, the French Minister, in which he showed unanswerably that the admission of Austria to authorised interference in the affairs of Central Italy rendered its position there even more dangerous than it had previously been. He even went so far as to communicate officially to Vienna, in August, the opinion that the employment of either French or Austrian forces to put down the clearly expressed will of Italy would not be justifiable. But grievous though the disappointment was, the language Napoleon used was perhaps more true than he intended when he declared that he had at least rendered Italy henceforth mistress of her own destinies. Italy took him at his word. The spirit which the war had roused was too strong to be subdued, and the Italians themselves established that Northern Kingdom he had falsely promised them.

For Italy had not been idle during the war. Though in the South the critical time was postponed, the seeds of future freedom were laid when in May Francis II. ascended the throne of Naples, rejected all the advances of Sardinia, and determined to follow to its inevitably fatal result the despotic conduct of his father. But Leopold of Tuscany, pursuing the same course, was driven from his capital, and, together with the Duke of Modena, was forced to take refuge in the Austrian camp, while the Duchess of Parma and her son escaped to Switzerland ; and even from Bologna, in the States of the Church, the Cardinal Legate had found it necessary to withdraw ; for the Austrians having been compelled to concentrate their troops, the fall of the rulers they had propped up followed as an inevitable result. The provisional governments of the Duchies at once placed themselves at the command of Sardinia. Victor Emmanuel accepted the responsibility, and in Florence, Parma, Modena, and even in Bologna, Commissioners were ruling in his name.

The unexpected conclusion of the war, and the terms of the armistice, threatened again to subvert this arrangement. Victor Emmanuel,

Progress of
Italy during
the war.

though bitterly disappointed, and in spite of Cavour's protest, accepted the armistice, and it was not without a vast amount of diplomatic intrigue that the hopes of the Italians were at length realised. With complete unanimity they refused to receive back the rulers of the Duchies, and quietly and calmly carried on provisional governments in the name of the Sardinian king. Meanwhile, Napoleon found that he had made a mistake, and as usual had recourse to England to get him out of the scrape, pressing eagerly for a Congress which might override the stipulations of Villafranca. The real question at issue was whether these stipulations for the restoration of the Dukes should be forced upon the Italians or not. In the view of the English Government, if a Congress was summoned, its duty was to secure the interests of the Italian people, and not those of this or that ruler. They consented therefore to the Congress only on the definite understanding that all their influence would be directed to prevent force being employed for the purpose of imposing upon the Italians any form of government or constitution. With a view to secure this object, Lord Palmerston contemplated a preliminary arrangement between England, France, and Sardinia. No such alliance however proved necessary ; Austria yielded to the determination of the Western Powers, and the Italian States having declared their wishes by unmistakable majorities, were annexed to the Sardinian monarchy. A Northern Kingdom of some 11,000,000 inhabitants was thus formed.

Formation of
the Italian
Northern
Kingdom.

To all appearance England had been co-operating with France in this matter. But it was open to Napoleon to say that its interference had thwarted his policy ; it had certainly rendered the restoration of the Italian Dukes impossible, and had established on his frontier a more important Power than he had contemplated. Even before the battle of Solferino the blot of selfish ambition which stained his Italian policy had been visible. He had already suggested that Savoy should be annexed to France. The disapprobation with which the suggestion was received had induced him to withdraw it ; but now he again raised the demand, asserting that it was necessary for his protection, and that as the English had been instrumental in establishing the Power which he dreaded they had no right to object. Unable to reply to this argument the English Government yielded. And Cavour, who had returned to office, thinking that the great advance made towards his prime object—a united Italy—was worth the sacrifice, braved the bitter anger of the Italian patriots and gave his consent to the cession,

Annexation of
Savoy to
France.

upon condition that the will of the people of Savoy was first taken. Their vote proved in favour of France; and Savoy, with Nice, became part of the French Empire.

A measure such as this tended largely to increase the mistrust which even Lord Palmerston was beginning to feel towards the Emperor, especially as the cession contained territories which had hitherto been included in the guaranteed neutrality of Switzerland. The failure of all efforts to induce Napoleon either to give a new frontier to Switzerland, or to allow the adjacent provinces to be neutralised, seemed to throw a threatening light upon the policy of

General
mistrust of
Napoleon.

aggrandisement he was pursuing. The dread of his future intentions was most strongly felt in Germany, where it was not unreasonably thought that once embarked on the business of rectifying frontiers, he would speedily be led to claim the Rhine Provinces; and in England, where his desertion of Italy had created a profound impression, while his persistent effort to increase his power on the sea was regarded as a covert threat. But in Italy itself the feeling against him was most pronounced. Venetia had been left in the hands of her Austrian tyrants; the misgovernment of Rome was still upheld by French troops; the ancient home of the Sardinian monarchy had just been taken from it. Help from France could no longer be hoped for by the Italian patriots; whatever was done must be henceforward done by themselves. The South of Italy, under Francis of Naples, was in a worse condition even than the North had been under its Austrian rulers, and Francis refused all advice. In vain France and England urged upon him the necessity of reforms; in vain the idea was suggested to him of close alliance with Sardinia, and the solution of the Italian question by the formation of two kingdoms of North and South Italy. In the spring of 1860 dissatisfaction, fed no doubt by the events in the north, came to open expression, and insurrection broke out in Sicily. An opportunity seemed to be offered for the armed intervention of Sardinia. But at this time the discussions as to the cession of Savoy were still going on. It was the business of Cavour to secure the advantages he had won and to risk nothing by overhaste. Jealousy of an increased Italian kingdom threatened at once to bring the French against him. A war of independence could scarcely avoid interfering with the Papal rights which France upheld, and the very question at present in the course of settlement proved the selfishness of French help, and that the interests of the Empire rather than the interests of Italy were likely to be considered. With true prudence the great statesman

refused at first to move. It was not even the Italian Governments but the Italian people who must henceforth help themselves. Garibaldi, the old defender of Rome, and the leader of the volunteers in the late war, smarted under the separation of his birthplace, Nice, from the Italy for which he had so earnestly fought; and, trusting to enthusiasm rather than to political combination, he secretly equipped at Genoa two steamers, and with a force of about 1000 volunteers embarked for Sicily. Landing on the 14th of May, in little more than two months he had entirely overthrown the Neapolitan Government in the island. By the end of July Messina, the last city of importance, had fallen into his hands. In June the King of Naples had offered to retrace his steps, to grant a constitution to his country, and to ally himself to Sardinia. The offer came too late. Success in Sicily had roused the Neapolitan feeling too far to allow of any such arrangement, and in August Garibaldi proclaimed his intention of carrying his arms across the straits into Naples. His movement met with extraordinary success. Though his 20,000 men were badly disciplined and badly provided, and could scarcely have withstood the opposition of disciplined forces, the disaffection of the Neapolitan army prevented any such opposition from being offered. Early in September he entered Naples in triumph, and the King was compelled to retire with such troops as remained faithful to him to the fortress of Gaeta.

Garibaldi's
success against
Naples.

Cavour had now a difficult game to play. There can be little doubt that he had secretly favoured Garibaldi's movements. But the extraordinary success which had attended the partisan chief, and the enthusiasm he had roused, threatened the gravest dangers. The General had no scruple in declaring that he would not check his course till Rome and Venetia were freed, and he could lay the crown of united Italy at Victor Emmanuel's feet.

Triumph of
Cavour's
policy.

Full of dislike for Cavour and his diplomatic ways, he even despatched a messenger to Turin demanding his dismissal. Joint action on the part of the soldier and politician was impossible. But Garibaldi, left to himself, would inevitably shock the interests of France in Rome, precipitate a war with Austria in Venetia, and bring upon Italy the disapprobation of every Court in Europe. The only chance of avoiding such disaster appeared to be to produce such an arrangement as would bring Garibaldi, if he advanced, into collision with the troops of Victor Emmanuel. At this crisis Cavour took the courageous step of breaking through the trammels of international law. He used as a pretext the formation by the Pope of a mercenary

army of foreigners for the purpose of maintaining his temporal power. Cavour demanded their instant dismissal, and meeting, as he expected, with refusal, poured his troops at once into Umbria and the marshes. The Sardinian troops were everywhere successful; Lamoricière, the French General of the Papal forces, was defeated and shut up in Ancona, and when the Italian fleet appeared off the city, rendering flight impossible, he surrendered. In less than three weeks the whole of the Papal troops were captured or disbanded, and the Piedmontese army moved across the road of the Garibaldians as they advanced towards Capua and Gaeta. The bold step which Cavour had taken had thus succeeded. The further advance of irresponsible conquest was rendered impossible. But it was so grave an infraction of the ordinary rules of international action, that Cavour thought it necessary to defend it in a circular despatch of great ability sent to the various Courts. His explanation of the difficulties of Sardinia, and the necessity which he felt, even for the protection of Europe, of preventing the Italian movement from degenerating into anarchy, met with sympathy in England, a sympathy tempered only by a fear lest France should again find in Italy a means of aggrandisement. An assurance on the part of Cavour that he would never again summon French arms to his assistance, that the rumoured surrender to France of the island of Sardinia was not dreamt of, and that he would restrain Garibaldi from assaulting Venetia, satisfied the minds of the English Government. The French Emperor expressed his disapprobation by withdrawing his ambassador from Turin, strengthening his troops in Rome, and assisting the Neapolitan King in Gaeta by the presence of his fleet. But the principle of the sovereignty of the people with regard to the choice of their rulers was too important to him to allow of active interference. He could scarcely deny to the people of Naples and the Papal States the right on the exercise of which he rested his claims to Savoy. The other Courts of Europe protested against Cavour's action, and the Pope lavished excommunications on the invaders of his territory. With the full sympathy of England alone Cavour proceeded on his course. In October he demanded from Parliament powers to annex, if they wished it, the Provinces of Southern and Central Italy. For the present he proposed to postpone further action with regard to Rome and Venetia, for the sake of securing what had already been won. A check in the advance of the insurrectionary troops fortunately gave time for this more regular intervention, and when, on the 26th of October, Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi met at the little town of Teano, the meeting was

hearty, and the General without difficulty handed over to the King the completion of his work. It is true that he at first urged that he should be appointed Dictator of Naples for two years, and that Cavour should be dismissed. But he yielded to the straightforward sense of the King, and withdrew to his home in the island of Capri. In February 1861, the French fleet having been withdrawn, Gaeta yielded, and on the 18th of that month the first Italian Parliament, drawn from a nation of 22,000,000 of inhabitants, assembled at Turin, and Victor Emmanuel assumed the title of King of Italy.

The conduct of England during this difficult crisis had on the whole been successful. Its sympathy had no doubt been of great use to the Italians; and although Lord John Russell's strongly expressed objection to any attack upon Venetia had given rise to some complaint, the country had been successfully guided in peace through a difficult time, and the friendship of the new Kingdom of Italy secured. But this success had not been gained without a considerable shock to the friendship between England and France; for the course of events had seemed to throw a somewhat sinister light upon the views of the Emperor. His restless conduct, his absorption of Savoy and Nice, the want of consistency which was observed between his assertions and his acts, coupled with his well-known determination to destroy, if possible, the Treaty arrangements of 1815, had excited a strong belief in the probability of an invasion from France. Lord Palmerston himself shared the apprehension, or at least thought it necessary by demonstrations of strength to check such an idea, if it existed, in the Emperor's mind. For this purpose he gave every support in his power to the establishment of volunteers. The movement, sanctioned in May 1859 under the Conservative Government, had spread with great rapidity. Before a year was over 180,000 men were enrolled in the rifle and artillery corps, of whom 40,000 were stated to be fit to take their work in the battlefield, and 15,000 from the capital alone were reviewed in Hyde Park by the Queen. But Lord Palmerston insisted upon preparations of a more costly character than the creation of a citizen army. In the first place the army and navy estimates had been largely increased. From £12,500,000 in 1859 the army estimates had in 1860 risen to £14,000,000, for the payment of 240,000 men; while the navy, which in the former year had cost a little more than £9,000,000, received in 1860 nearly £12,000,000. The case made out for these increases was a good one, if England was to compete in its

Victor
Emmanuel
King of Italy.
Feb. 1861.

Preparations
in England
against French
invasion.

armaments with foreign powers. For the day of large armaments was beginning. European troubles had called for the formation of large armies. France alone had 600,000 men actually in arms. The case of the fleet was even stronger. The introduction of steam had practically rendered the reconstruction of all navies necessary, and in the race England had not kept that forward place which it had always been our policy to maintain. In 1860 there was but little difference in the strength of the steam fleets of France, of Russia, and of England. And if, as even Mr. Cobden had suggested, where the French had two ships England ought to have three, a large outlay was certainly necessary. But Lord Palmerston was not content even with this. If our naval supremacy was to be maintained, its citadels, which were the dockyards, must, he thought, be secured from the unexpected assaults which steam power, in the hands of our enemies, rendered possible. A Commission had been sitting upon this point, and in accordance with its report the Premier recommended an outlay during the next four years of no less than £9,000,000 upon the complete fortification of the chief naval arsenals.

The conduct of England, in the difficulties which arose in the North of Europe, was by no means so successful as it had proved in Italy.

The Ministry was in fact confronted by the same sort of national aspiration as that which, in the case of Italy, it had been able to support. The national feeling of Germany had been of late years constantly rising. It is true that, unlike Italy, it was not suffering from any foreign occupation, or any national tyranny. But it was suffering deeply from the feeling of the political weakness which was the result of its constitution and of its subdivision among many sovereign states, and was longing for some form of national unity. Unable, in the presence of the rival claims to leadership of the two great Powers of Prussia and Austria, to arrive at any satisfactory system of united government, it could at least give an expression to its desires by attempting to bring into more immediate connection with the central body any fragments of the German nationality which were broken off from it. It was this which lay at the bottom of the lengthy and intricate Sleswig-Holstein question. And although England saw with extreme displeasure the attacks of a vast and powerful people upon a little kingdom such as Denmark, attacks which could scarcely be regarded as other than wanton aggressions, it was impossible to check the strong German feeling upon the subject, especially as both Austria and Prussia sought, by supporting the feeling, to establish new claims for the leadership which each desired.

Difficulties in
the North of
Europe.

That Prussia was already in the powerful hands of Bismarck was enough to prevent success from attending any intervention, which, while shrinking, as was well known, from the employment of force, confined itself to suggestions, advice, and threats.

The Sleswig-Holstein question, which had played so large a part in the difficulties of 1848, had again come to a crisis. An effort had been made in 1852 to complete the probably impossible task of satisfying at once the desire of those who sought the autonomy of the German Duchies and their indissoluble union with Sleswig, and the national determination of the Danish Government to maintain the kingdom in its integrity. On the one hand negotiations had been carried on, in the course of which Denmark had given a promise to Prussia and Austria that Sleswig should not be incorporated with the Kingdom of Denmark proper, and that, in the new constitution it was establishing no part of the Kingdom should be subordinate to another. On the other hand, by the Treaty of London (Dec. 30, 1852) the succession to the Danish monarchy had been arranged, and its integrity sanctioned by most of the great Powers of Europe. Attempts to give effect to its promises, on the part of Denmark, had hitherto proved unavailing. Again and again the German Diet had declared itself dissatisfied with the arrangements suggested. A plan, which it must be confessed was clumsy enough, for establishing in the four Provinces of Denmark four separate equal Parliaments, which in matters connected with the general monarchy should be called on to sanction identical Bills, was put forward by Lord Russell, but rejected by the Danes. At length, in March 1863, an ordinance was published, and thrown into form by a constitution in November of the same year, securing what appeared to be the completest self-government for Holstein. But the very completeness of the self-rule of one of the Duchies seemed to imply the closer connection of the other with the main body of the State. Upon this ground the German Confederation, and what was more important, the great Powers Prussia and Austria, protested against the arrangement, and proceeded so far as to threaten "Federal execution," that is, occupation by the Federal troops, unless the constitution was immediately abrogated.

Things had reached this point when the sudden death of Frederick VII. of Denmark occurred. It would have seemed proper that the stipulations of the London Treaty should have been at once carried out, and that Christian IX., the appointed heir of the Glücksberg branch of the royal family, should immediately take possession of the throne, and with it of the Duchy of

The Sleswig-
Holstein
question.

Death of the
King of Den-
mark. Nov.
1863.

Holstein. But, taking advantage of the national feeling in Germany, and in Holstein itself, a pretender appeared in the person of Frederick of Augustenberg, a member of an elder branch of the royal family, whose father at the time of the London Treaty had abdicated his rights. His cause was warmly espoused both by the Diet and by the Liberal Opposition in the Prussian Chambers, at that time in the majority. In December Saxon and Hanoverian troops on the part of the Confederation entered Holstein, and in January the federal commissioners established Frederick in the Ducal Government at Kiel. But the Diet of the Confederation was not allowed to keep the matter in its hands. Bismarck had lately been called to the head of the ministry in Berlin. Believing, like the King his master, that military strength was necessary for Prussia, he had fallen out completely with the Chambers, which refused the supplies he considered necessary. He was regarded at the moment as the arch-opponent of all liberal advance, even in the direction of a united Germany. It was not so. Bismarck desired that unity as earnestly as the wildest theorist. But he was before all things a practical statesman, and was determined that Prussia should stand at the head of the nation when united. His experience as representative of Prussia at the Frankfort Diet had taught him that the chief obstacle to Prussian advance was the influence of Austria upon the smaller States, and its consequent command of the majority of the Diet. To follow the lead of the Diet would be merely to strengthen the hands of Austria. To induce Austria to adopt a policy apparently in opposition to the Diet would be to weaken the influence of his enemy. He determined therefore from the first to treat the Sleswig-Holstein question as an international rather than as a federal matter. He persuaded Austria to join in this line of action, and to demand, under pain of war, from the King of Denmark, the fulfilment of its promises made in 1852. Leaving on one side the disputed claim for the Sleswig-Holstein succession, he proposed in the Diet that the immediate withdrawal of the Constitution of November with regard to Sleswig should be required, and, when this was rejected, in company with Austria he took the war into his own hands.

It was of course impossible that a little kingdom such as Denmark could withstand the invasion of two great Powers. In spite of the gallant defence of the fortress of Dippel, the invaders carried all before them upon land, though suffering some losses at sea, and Jutland, with the exception of the extreme north, fell into their power. The only hope for the Danes lay in the interference of the

Bismarck's
policy.

neutral Powers, parties to the London Treaty, and Lord Russell at once attempted to assemble them in Conference. At length upon the 28th of April the Conference met in London. An armistice for a month was agreed to, and on the 12th of May the real business of the Conference began. It at once became evident that there was but little hope of saving Denmark from heavy losses. For the Prussian Plenipotentiary repudiated the Treaty of 1852, which was the guarantee of the integrity of Denmark. He took up the position which Bismarck had from the first occupied, declared that it was an international quarrel between Denmark and the great German Powers, and that war having broken out, the Treaties between them were abrogated. The neutral Powers, on their side, held that the Treaty of London still existed. It was however plain that unless the neutral Powers were ready to enforce their view, their arguments would be but of slight avail. Suggestions were indeed made for the maintenance of the union of Holstein with Sleswig, either still connected with the Danish monarchy or freed from that connection. But as both these plans involved the surrender to Germany either directly or indirectly of a large part of Sleswig occupied by Danes, and of another part where Danes and Germans were mingled, they were at once rejected. Lord Russell then produced the English suggestion. It was a compromise, and certainly must have convinced the Danes of the futility of reliance upon English aid. Lord Russell gave up the problem of harmonising provincial self-government with national unity, and advised, for the avoidance of future disputes, that the Danes should yield absolutely Holstein, Lauenburg, and the southern or German part of Sleswig.

The practical withdrawal of English assistance left the Danes helpless. Henceforward it was a mere question of boundaries, of how much or how little they should surrender. Yet they had all along declared that there were limits of concession beyond which they could not go. While therefore accepting Lord Russell's frontier, they positively refused to entertain the idea of surrendering the Danish part of Sleswig included in the counter-proposition of the Germans. They would not even allow of arbitration on the point. The feeling with which the Danes accepted the part forced upon them was shown by the speech of the King at the opening of the Rigsrad in June 1864: "We have recently learnt how little the clearest right reckons in Europe, and how isolated we are. We therefore acceded to the painful sacrifice of the country south of the Schley; the enemy demands more, but we refuse, being

Failure of the
London
Conference.
June 1864.

Denmark
deserted and
crushed.

conscious that the people are with us. May God grant that in a certain place (meaning England) the sympathy for us may grow into active support." Hostilities were renewed in June. Again resistance proved hopeless. The Isle of Alsen was taken, and Fredericia abandoned, and without allies Denmark found herself compelled to yield. A Treaty of Peace was concluded at Vienna, by which the three Duchies, including the islands belonging to Sleswig, were ceded to Prussia and Austria.

The Treaty was pregnant with great results for Germany, for out of it arose the contest for supremacy between the two great Powers, Austria and Prussia, which was closed in 1866 upon the battlefield of Sadowa.

To the English Government it brought unpopularity and disgrace. The English people had been deeply moved by the struggle of the little kingdom in the grasp of its powerful oppressors. The Ministers on whom they relied to give expression to their desires had contented themselves with a bustling and officious interference, an interchange of hard words, to be closed only by a meek surrender, and a complete diplomatic defeat. The conduct of Lord Russell, Lord Derby thought might be best expressed by the words "meddle and muddle," while Disraeli found in the negotiations ground for a motion of want of confidence of a more than usually stinging character. "The course pursued by Government has failed to maintain," he said, "their avowed policy of upholding the independence and integrity of Denmark, and has lowered the just influence of the country in the capitals of Europe, and therefore diminished the securities for peace." It was only by the skill of Lord Palmerston, who, passing lightly over the points at issue, expatiated on the financial triumphs of the Government, rather than on the merits of the case, that a scanty majority was won for the Ministry.

It was not only in the affairs of Denmark that the diplomacy of the Government met with a severe rebuff. Early in the year 1863 an act of tyranny on the part of the Russian police drove Poland to rebellion. The conscription for the army, which under any circumstances presses heavily upon a people, had been used in Poland as a means of political repression. In one night more than 2000 men of the middle class had been seized and forced into military service. It was an act described by Lord Napier, the English Ambassador at St. Petersburg, as "a design to make a clean sweep of the revolutionary youth of Poland, to shut up the most energetic and dangerous spirits in the restraints of the Russian army; simply a plan

Consequent
discredit of the
English
Ministry.

Insurrection in
Poland. 1863.

to kidnap the insurrection and carry it off to Siberia or the Caucasus." The Grand Duke Constantine was at that time Viceroy of Poland. It was known that he intended to make this violent use of the conscription, and a central committee had already been formed, and had issued calls upon the people to resist. When the blow was struck this advice was taken, and the insurrection broke out in several parts of Poland at once. The number of the insurgents was small compared with that of the army opposed to them, but the whole country was involved in a network of conspiracy. The combatants assembled rapidly in the woods, cut off detachments, won or lost engagements, and disappeared from the field, only to reappear suddenly with similar results elsewhere. The people however proved unable to resist the large forces which the Czar could bring against them. By degrees the insurrection was suppressed, with circumstances of violence and cruelty which, combined with the immediate cause of the rising, excited in Europe the strongest sympathy for the oppressed Poles, and abhorrence for the Russian Government. Bismarck and Prussia were included in the general disapproval. He had joined in a convention with Russia by which the troops of the oppressor had right of passage through the Prussian territories, and the fugitive Poles were to be given up.

Again England thought fit to come forward as the champion of oppressed nationality; and the Government seemed fully to sympathise in the expressions of disapproval of the action of Russia, which in debate after debate found utterance in the two Houses of Parliament. But again when it came to action the Ministry laid itself open to that failure which must generally attend diplomacy unsupported by force; again the Foreign Office appeared criticising, arguing, and lecturing without result. It took its stand upon the Vienna Treaties of 1815, which, according to its interpretation, placed Poland in the hands of Russia upon the condition of its receiving a national constitution—a condition which had been flagrantly disregarded. Lord Russell even went so far as to lay down six points, embodying a perfect amnesty and complete constitutional arrangements, as the basis of discussion at a Congress of the signatories of the Vienna Treaties which he proposed to call. The Russian Minister, politely enough, but very firmly, refused to listen to such suggestions, although they were supported in some degree both by France and Austria. Sure indeed that no armed intervention was intended, for even the most violent assaults in the English Parliament were coupled with declarations in favour of peaceful inter

The futile
remonstrance
of England.

vention only, he had no difficulty in assuming a high tone. He declared that the Czar had always had the happiness of the Poles at heart, that some at least of the points suggested had been already granted, that it was false to suppose after the fashion of England that one sort of government suited every country, and that before any concessions could be considered order must be restored. The insurrection, he declared, was the work not of the Poles themselves, who were well affected and improving in prosperity, but of reckless agitators supported by the revolutionists of all countries, who were pressing on a propaganda of their views under the influence of an irresistible terrorism. That there was some truth in this assertion can scarcely be denied. The position taken up by the English Government, the *via media* of liberal constitutionalism which it always recommended, is difficult to maintain. The Treaties of 1815 had been an attempt to re-establish, with some attention to new liberal doctrines, the old system of dynastic rule. Every attempt to encourage the growing feeling of nationality is inevitably a blow aimed against that system. Of necessity those who have supported the attempt have found themselves in alliance with the most vigorous and determined opponents of the system, the leaders of revolutionary thought. It is not always that a great and commanding statesman such as Cavour is to be found capable at once of using and dominating his dangerous allies. By falling back upon the Treaties of 1815 to support a national movement, Lord Russell was in fact taking up an untenable position, and as the breach of treaty should logically lead to war, he was laying England open, unless indeed war was intended, to the very complete rebuff which it encountered. It may also be doubted whether the knowledge that foreign nations are sympathising with them, and that negotiations are on foot which may perhaps lead to armed assistance, does not excite in insurgents hope and determination to continue a course which only ends in their own destruction.

With various results, and various degrees of success, the Government had at least succeeded, amid the complications of Europe, in keeping England in peace. It was not, however, able to avoid some wars of secondary importance which seem inseparable from the wide spread of its Empire.

The Chinese War, which had been brought to a conclusion as it was hoped by the Treaty of Tientsin in 1858, had broken out in an exaggerated form in the following year. Mr. Bruce, the brother of Lord Elgin, had been appointed Minister Plenipotentiary under the Treaty, which had stipulated that a British

War in China.
1859.

Embassy should be established at Peking. It had been thought wiser to waive this last condition, and while preserving the right of visiting Peking as occasion required to establish the British Embassy at Shanghai. But it was Mr. Bruce's duty to proceed first to the capital for the purpose of exchanging ratifications of the Treaty; and the extreme dislike of the Chinese to treat with foreign nations upon terms of equality rendered it probable that they would have recourse to every shift to avoid this visit. The French and English plenipotentiaries (for the nations were acting in common) were therefore supplied with a considerable escort of gun-boats under the command of Admiral Hope. When the allied squadron arrived off the mouth of the Peiho river, it was found that the forts destroyed in the previous year had been reconstructed and much strengthened, and fresh booms and obstructions placed across the river. As all demands for the removal of these obstacles were refused, the Admiral was instructed to force them. But the squadron was not sufficiently strong for the purpose. It encountered a powerful and furious cannonade, and several of the gun-boats were sunk or disabled. An attempt to take the forts by landing a body of men failed disastrously. The assailants had to wade through mud up to their waist, and as they straggled forward were exposed to an overwhelming fire; their scaling ladders were smashed or left sticking in the mud; and though a little band succeeded in pushing on to the further side of the last ditch by which their course was obstructed, the troops were compelled to fall back with a loss of a third of their whole number, including three-fourths of the officers who had landed.

Defeat of the
Chinese.
June 1859.

A more disastrous failure could scarcely have happened, not so much on account of the immediate effects, as because the necessity of restoring their *prestige* drove England and France to one of those exhibitions of force against a weak and semi-barbarous people which add so little to the credit or honour of great nations. Lord Elgin and Baron Gros resumed their position as plenipotentiaries for the two countries, and Sir Hope Grant and General Montauban were placed in command of a considerable body of troops, French, English, and Indian, to insist upon the execution of the late treaty, and obtain reparation for the repulse encountered. Apology, and the restoration of guns or material captured, the admission of the Western Ministers to Peking, and the ratification of the Treaty of Tientsin, with an indemnity of 4,000,000 taels, were the terms laid down for immediate acceptance. The ultimatum was absolutely rejected, and in August

vict.

2 A

1860, the combined fleets and armies proceeded to force their way to the capital. Not without desperate fighting, the forts were taken, and Tientsin reached, whence it was determined to advance to Tangchou, a few miles from Peking, and there, and there only, to treat. As the army approached, Mr. Parkes and Mr. Wade, Lord Elgin's secretaries, went forward and met the Chinese commissioners. An agreement was arrived at by which the army was to halt within five miles of the city, whither the ambassadors should then repair and sign the convention. Mr. Parkes and his comrades rode back to the place appointed to show the troops their camping-ground, were astonished to find it already occupied by a large Chinese army, and hastened again to the High Commissioners to demand the meaning of this breach of faith. Meanwhile the army on arriving at the appointed ground found itself in presence of the Chinese forces. Sir Hope Grant, apprehensive of the safety of the Englishmen who were within the Chinese lines, attempted to avoid a collision, but information that the escort attending the European emissaries had been treacherously assaulted, and a French officer murdered, induced him to put an end to his delay. He attacked and defeated the Chinese. Mr. Parkes and those with him had on their return to Tangchou been seized, some of them hurried up the country where they were barbarously murdered, Mr. Parkes himself with Mr. Loch being confined with every indignity in the foul common prison at Peking. Lord Elgin of course refused to negotiate unless the prisoners were restored, and allowed three days for their surrender and the signature and completion of the Treaty. As the Emperor's brother, Prince Kung, who was superintending the action of the Chinese, continued to refuse his demands, on the 6th of October the army advanced, and captured and pillaged the summer palace, which was filled with vast wealth of rich manufactures and curiosities. The stroke was so far successful that Mr. Parkes and the other prisoners confined in Peking were two days afterwards released; and when every disposition had been made for the bombardment of the capital, the Chinese lost heart and surrendered the city, which was at once occupied by the allied troops. The barbarous treatment to which the prisoners were subjected then first became known, and Lord Elgin thought it necessary to order the complete destruction of the summer palace, and to demand the immediate payment of a considerable indemnity for the murdered men. The opposition of the Chinese was so completely broken, that no further hesitation was shown; and on the 24th of October

Treachery of
the Chinese.

Complete
success of the
English.
Oct. 1860.

a convention was signed by which apology was made for the obstruction of the river in the preceding June; the Treaty of Tientsin completely ratified, the war indemnity being doubled; the Port of Tientsin opened to British trade; and a small territory in the Province of Canton ceded to the English to be held as a dependency of Hong-Kong. On the exchange of ratifications, the allied forces evacuated the city and withdrew.

England was involved also in brief hostilities with Japan. The policy of that country was even more exclusive than that of China. Previous to 1858 the trade had been limited to the Dutch, who occupied an island in the Bay of Yokohama, beyond which they were not allowed to pass. But in that year, on his way home from concluding the Treaty of Tientsin, Lord Elgin signed at Yeddo a treaty of commerce and friendship with the Tikoon or Governor of Japan. By this, in the course of the next five years, five ports were to be opened to British subjects, a diplomatic agent was allowed to reside in Yeddo, and consular agents in the other open towns. Although the friendship was cemented by the visit to England of Ambassadors from Japan in 1862, the jealousy of the natives continued, and it was found necessary to remove the seat of the English Embassy from Yeddo to Yokohama. Mr. Richardson, a member of the Embassy, and some friends were riding upon a road where by treaty foreigners were allowed to go, when a "Damio," or noble, and his suite came past them. Though the Englishmen withdrew to give him room, the native soldiers fell upon them and murdered Mr. Richardson. This was on the 14th September 1862. As soon as possible after the event the English Minister demanded £100,000 as compensation from the Tikoon, and £25,000 from the Prince of Satsuma, the Damio implicated. The Tikoon acknowledged his responsibility, and paid the £100,000 with a full apology. But the Prince refused to pay the indemnity, and after the lapse of some months, during which hostility began to show itself, and the ports were closed to Europeans, the English agent called upon the Admiral of the station to proceed against Kagoshima, the capital of the refractory Damio. The Admiral by way of reprisal seized some Japanese steamers, upon which batteries from the shore opened a heavy fire upon the English ships. The fire was returned, the palace bombarded, and unfortunately the greater part of the town burnt. Upon this resistance ceased, the Prince yielded, promising to apprehend and punish the offenders, and the Japanese Government again opened all the ports with the exception of Yokohama.

War in Japan.
1862.

Murder of Mr.
Richardson.

Another little war in 1864 nearly produced a Ministerial crisis. At the instigation of the Governor of Cape Coast Castle on the African Gold Coast, an expedition was organised against the King of Ashantee, who had made an attack on the friendly tribe of Fantees. The pestilential character of the country worked havoc among the English troops, and the expedition returned without having effected anything, at a cost of many lives and much money. The Government was assailed for having carelessly neglected the proper precautions, and a motion by Sir John Hay, which was practically a motion of censure, was lost only by the narrow majority of seven. The feeling with which the ineffectual diplomacy in Europe, coupled with the somewhat hasty assertion of British rights against semi-barbarous people, was regarded by one section of the people is illustrated by the tone of the debate on this motion. "The responsibility lies," said Sir John Hay, "on the Cabinet, the men who had betrayed Denmark and Government blamed. truckled to Germany, who had convulsed China and devastated Japan, who ten years ago had sent a British army to perish of want and cold in the Crimean winter, and had now sent some hundreds of British troops to perish of hunger, thirst, fever and want of shelter, in the burning plains and pestilential swamps of Central Africa." But the disapprobation was chiefly a party feeling. There is no reason to suppose that the Opposition would have acted on any different principle had they been in power. They had again and again declared that war in Europe was impossible, and it is the unfortunate necessity of our position in close contact through our trade with barbarous and semi-barbarous nations, that we should at times assume the attitude of the bully, and employ force, the only argument likely to prove effective.

Far more important, and more absorbing in its interest than diplomatic wrangles, or small and distant warfare, was the terrible crisis through which the United States was passing. And the Government deserves great credit for its action during the difficulties of the time. It followed a cool and dignified course in the midst of the most excited popular feeling, and in presence of bitter suffering brought by the war upon our own people. The triumph of the Republican Party, and the election of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States, at the close of 1860, may be regarded as the immediate cause of the secession of the Southern States. From that time till the spring of 1865, when the fall of the Confederate capital Richmond, and the

War in
Ashantee.
1864.

Firm attitude
of Government
during the
American War.

surrender of General Lee closed the encounter with the triumph of the North, the two sections of the great Republic were engaged in warfare on a gigantic scale.

The division between the Northern and Southern States had been of long standing. On commercial questions their interests were directly opposed. The North was a manufacturing country, the people of the South were without manufactures, and were the producers of raw material. In the supposed interests of manufactures a protective tariff was established, which in some instances was practically prohibitory. The effect was naturally to raise the price of every manufactured article which the Southerner required, and to oblige him to exchange his raw products disadvantageously in the European markets. But hand in hand with the commercial question went the question of slavery, an institution forming an inherent part of the civilisation of the South, and closely connected with the form which its industrial life assumed. For many years the struggle between the slaveholders and the abolitionists had been acute. The rage for abolition had become a fanaticism, and excited a corresponding feeling among those who held that abolition was an assault on the most obvious rights of property. As Territory after Territory demanded admission among the sovereign States of the Union, the battlefield on which this question was fought had been found in the establishment or abolition of slavery by the constitution of each new made State. An attempt, by what is known as the Missouri Compromise, to fix as a limit between the two systems 36.30° of north latitude had failed as civilisation rolled westward; and the heat with which the rights of the slaveholders were supported when Kansas was demanding admission to the Union had produced something little short of civil war. At length in 1856 the election of Buchanan to the Presidency over the abolitionist candidate Fremont, seemed to throw into the hands of the South the chance of securing their supremacy.

The election of Lincoln in 1860 appeared to snatch from them the prize they had thought secured, and almost immediately South Carolina began to speak of refusing to submit to Northern domination, and of the necessity of disruption. Buchanan's last message on December 3d, 1860, was intended to suggest a compromise. Disruption involved the gravest constitutional questions. It depended upon the character of the Confederation of the United States. As each State was recognised as sovereign, as each had joined the Confederation voluntarily, it was held by the advocates of separation that

Causes of the
war.

Secession of the
Southern States.

it was within the rights of each to secede of its own will from a contract into which it had voluntarily entered; on the other hand the dominant party in the North asserted that the contract was for ever, that the limits of State sovereignty as contrasted with national sovereignty were clearly marked, and that the right of secession did not lie within them. Again the question was at issue which must inevitably occur in composite nations; and to those who regarded the greatness of the American Republic as of higher value than the gratification of provincial patriotism there could be no doubt as to the side which should command their support. But the irritation caused by political defeat, and the very natural abhorrence to submit to the domination of a party which seemed for its own selfish purposes to be hampering their commercial prosperity, and in its one-sided fanaticism to be threatening them with a vast confiscation, blinded the eyes of the Southerners, and made them ready at once to accept the constitutional view which was so entirely in harmony with their wishes. One after the other with great rapidity the Southern States followed the line marked out for them by Carolina. By May 1861, eleven States had broken from the Union. The pretext, as we gather from the declaration of South Carolina, was the interference or threatened interference of the Federal Government with the institution of slavery sanctioned by the constitution of the States. The principle involved was the right of secession.

The war was thus two-sided; to some a war against slavery, to others a war for the maintenance of the Union. It was this twofold issue which confused public opinion in England. While hatred of slavery attracted it towards the North, sympathy with those who thought themselves oppressed attracted it towards the South. But other and less creditable reasons tended much to increase among the wealthier classes the favour in which the Southern cause was held; with their usual misapprehension of the true meaning of the word, they supposed that the Southerners came nearer to satisfy the ordinary definition of gentlemen than their Northern brethren. Descended as a fact from settlers of a higher social rank than the New Englander, their form of civilisation had given them something of the manners and external culture which belong to a leisured class. The wealthy Englishman, forgetful of the shallowness of this veneer, felt that he had more in common with the well-descended planter than with the rough and energetic man of the North, to whom he attributed the pushing vulgarity of the self-made man and that national self-assertion

Feeling of
England on the
War.

which both politically and socially was regarded as the most odious characteristic of the American. Certainly, for one reason or the other, partisanship of the South was the common tone of English society. It cannot be denied that the North was inclined to act in a high-handed fashion. The Southern States had speedily formed themselves into a Confederation, and elected as their President Jefferson Davis; they seized the national property, called out troops, and supplied their want of a fleet by giving commissions to privateers. But the North, in spite of the complete organisation thus begun, insisted upon treating the Confederate States merely as rebels. It was upon this difference of view that the first difficulty of England and other European countries arose. The Ministry had to decide whether the Southerners should be treated merely as rebels, or whether they would extend to them the rights of a belligerent Power. Lord Russell early declared that England had determined to maintain not only strict neutrality but close silence in the dispute. No doubt the susceptibility of the Northerners rendered it advisable that England should, in this case at all events, abstain from that moral interference in which it indulged so freely in European quarrels. Our Ambassador, Lord Lyons, was instructed to give no advice, although always on fitting occasions to urge the desire of the English Government for a peaceful solution of the existing differences. It was also thought right, on the 14th of May, to put out a Proclamation of strict neutrality, and to prohibit English subjects from enlisting or supplying privateers, or in any way affording assistance to either party. But the circumstances of the case did not allow the Government to rest merely in this position. English privateers were sailing under the flag of the Southern Confederacy. The Northern Government had declared a blockade of the Southern ports, and it became necessary to state publicly whether the same rights were to be extended to these vessels as would be given to those of a country engaged in war, or whether they should be treated as pirates, and whether the blockade was to be respected or not. In May 1862 Lord Russell explained that in the view of the Cabinet belligerency was not so much a principle as a fact, that when any mass of a population engaged in war reached a certain force and consistency it was entitled to be treated as a belligerent, and that the Southern Confederacy appeared to satisfy those conditions. And further, some weeks later he informed the Commons that orders had been given to prohibit armed ships and privateers both on one side

Determination
of the Ministry
to maintain
neutrality.

and the other from bringing their prizes into English ports, thus treating both parties in exactly the same manner. But it still remained a question whether the Southern Confederacy should be recognised as a nation. The friends of the South continually pressed that this should be done. But the Government consistently held the position which it took up at the first, that the time had not yet arrived for so complete a measure.

It was a matter of great difficulty to preserve this neutrality. From the first, and throughout the whole lengthened contest, the Northern States regarded the attitude of England as unfriendly. The neutrality was indeed on the verge of being brought to a close and changed into hostility by the action of the States themselves. The Confederacy were despatching commissioners to plead their cause in Europe. Unable with safety to pass through the blockading squadron, Mr. Mason and Mr. Slidell, accredited respectively to England and France, made their way to Havana, a neutral port, and there embarked in the *Trent*, an English and therefore neutral ship. On the passage to Europe the *San Jacinto*, a Union ship of war, came up with the *Trent*. The right of search was claimed and exercised; and with some roughness, and in spite of the protest of the English Admiralty agent in charge of the mails, the Commissioners were carried off to New York. This was an obvious infraction of international law. But the Americans assumed a hostile and threatening tone when the restoration of the Commissioners was demanded. War appeared so inevitable that Lord Palmerston thought it right to despatch a considerable body of troops to Canada; the militia and volunteers of that province were put upon a war footing; and all England was for a while eager to vindicate its insulted honour. Fortunately, though in a grudging and contemptuous manner, President Lincoln and Mr. Seward, the Secretary, took a prudent course and gave up the captives. In this case the French acted a most friendly part, and earnestly supported the representations of the English Ministry.

The conduct of the Northerners and the events of the war seemed alike calculated to strengthen the hands of the partisans of the South.

The Northern armies had made no impression on the seceded provinces, and had suffered a heavy defeat at Bull Run. The Confederate forces hung threateningly round Washington, and the Federal squadron in the James river, had in one short hour been destroyed by the *Merrimac*, a steamer roughly thatched with railway iron. The one great success of the

Success of the Confederates in 1862.

Northern arms, the capture of New Orleans, had afforded General Butler an opportunity of issuing a proclamation so outrageous as to excite the disgust of all Europe. In their determination to maintain the Union, the people of the North had submitted to grave infractions of the Constitution; the powers of the Courts of Justice seemed almost in abeyance, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was held to lie in the power of the President, and the prisons were crowded with political offenders, among whom some Englishmen were numbered. To complete the blockade of Charlestown, stone-ships had been sunk across the harbour, and it was regarded by the English as an act of vandalism thus to destroy a commercial port. Meanwhile the cessation of intercourse caused by the blockade was beginning to tell with serious effect upon the cotton industry of Lancashire. Already prices were rapidly rising, and that terrible season known as the cotton famine had commenced. Again the demand was raised throughout the country and in Parliament for recognition of the independence of the Confederacy, and still more strongly for a declaration of the inefficiency of the blockade. But the Ministry held firm. They were able to assert that suffering as they were, the working men of England were true to their conviction that right lay with the North, and able with equal certainty to point to the fact of the want of cotton as a proof that, in spite of the determined efforts of certain English speculators to run the blockade, its efficiency could not be questioned.

The difficulties avoided one year reappeared in greater strength the next. For the very length of the struggle afforded a support to the argument that conquest of the South was impossible, and that the action of England should be governed by that fact. At the same time the relations between England and the North were subjected to a great strain. The persistent efforts of English speculators to run the blockade, and obtain the great advantages which the enormously high price of cotton in England and of European goods in the Southern ports offered, with good reason irritated the Northern Government, and induced them to adopt a high tone in their intercourse with England, to which it was found difficult to submit. The Federal cruisers were charged with capturing English vessels trading with Matamoros on the Mexican frontier, and the Federal Admiralty Courts with injustice in their decision with respect to such captures. But the chief cause of irritation lay in the form of naval warfare which, regardless of the difficulties it inflicted on neutral countries, the Confederate States

The Ministry hold firm to neutrality.

Strained relations between England and America. 1863.

adopted. Vessels were built for them in neutral ports, were subsequently met at some fixed point of rendezvous by officers bearing Confederate Commissions, and having means to supply them with armaments. The ships then, without ever touching at a belligerent port, proceeded on their course of plunder with a success which went far to destroy the mercantile navy of the North. In the year 1864, Mr. Shaw Lefevre estimated the number of Northern ships destroyed by the cruisers at 187, and their value at £3,000,000. The best known of these cruisers was the *Alabama*, but there were several others, such as the *Georgia*, the *Florida*, the *Shenandoah*, and the *Rappahanac*, almost equally destructive. While the *Alabama* was building at Liverpool, the Government had had information of its destination, and were preparing to detain it, when it suddenly put to sea, and under the able command of Captain Semmes it became a scourge to the American shipping. Nothing could convince the Americans that the Government had in this case done its duty. The detention under similar circumstances of the *Alexandra* was noticed only to show the course that ought to have been previously pursued, and language was used both by the Press and by the American Administration which could scarcely fail to excite strong feelings of animosity in England. Interest and injured national feeling were speciously supported by political considerations. Mr. Roebuck did not scruple to state his belief that United America was too powerful a country, and likely to be the bully of the world, and that the separation of the North and South was therefore politically desirable. The Government was plied with arguments drawn from the wishes of the Emperor of the French. He had, in 1862, urged that England, France, and Russia should attempt a mediation, but had encountered a refusal from Lord Russell, who declared the time for mediation had not arrived; and if the account of private conversations subsequently produced in Parliament is to be credited, the Emperor had even desired to join with England in the acknowledgment of the independence of the South. It was urged that if the South should prove successful the rejection of these overtures would place France in a position of close friendship with the victorious Confederacy, and England in the position of its enemy. Nor was the final success of the South at all improbable. The upper classes of England clung to the belief that it was impossible it should be conquered, and the course of the war still seemed favourable to it. The chief command of the army of the Potomac, on which the duty of assaulting the Confederate capital, Richmond, fell, had not yet passed into the

hands of a capable general. In June the Confederate forces had been able to assume the offensive, to cross the Potomac, and threaten Washington. They were indeed checked at the great battle of Gettysburg, and fell back again across the river, but the Federals in Virginia had made no advance, while political disturbances and fierce riots in New York caused by the conscription seemed to point to an approaching collapse.

Still amidst all these difficulties, the Ministry held their ground, took their stand upon law, defended their action with regard to the privateers by alleging that those cruisers which had escaped from the English dockyards had done so by accident, or by the unavoidable ignorance of the administration, and that those which had been retained were retained in strict accordance with law. On the political side of the question the Government was equally determined. No assaults could move them from their view that the fate of the Union was better left to be settled by the Americans themselves than by means of mediation, and that the issue of the war was far too doubtful to form a groundwork for political speculation. In the year 1864, though the same difficulties continued, and the same questions came to the front, the wisdom of this course began to show itself. Generals had at length been found who knew how to use the vast resources of the North to good effect. Roughly speaking, the plan of the Northern War had been to surround ^{Turn of the tide in 1864.} the Confederate States, and force their opponents inwards upon their capital. While the main army was pressing upon Virginia, and the fleet was blockading or assaulting the line of the eastern coast, troops were forcing their way down the Mississippi to complete the circuit by reaching New Orleans, which was already in Federal hands. The very strong fortress of Vicksburg had long proved an insurmountable obstacle in this direction, but Generals Grant and Sherman had been able to reduce it, and a great success had met the Federal forces in Tennessee, at the battle of Chattanooga. While Sherman was left to pursue the campaign in the West, Grant was intrusted with the army of the Potomac, which thus fell under the hands of a general who understood perfectly the sources of Northern strength. Less skilful than his opponent Lee, he was possessed of the most dogged tenacity of purpose, and, conscious of his numerical superiority, continued, without regard to losses, to pour attack after attack upon the dwindling forces of the Confederates. Meanwhile Sherman, having captured Atlanta, the capital of Georgia, suddenly broke loose from his communications, and,

out-manceuvring his opponents, started on a march of three weeks to the sea-coast. His force, lost to view for a time, reappeared almost uninjured at Savanna. The Federals had thus a new base of operations upon the sea, and, advancing northward, pushed their opponents before them towards the ever-lessening circle, of which Richmond was the centre. It was plain that the strength of the Confederates was exhausted. Deprived of all support from abroad, without trade or manufacturing industry of their own, and with a population which, as far as its white element was concerned, was small, it is evident,

Final success of
the North.
April 1865.

on looking back, that from the first their cause was hopeless. The hour of exhaustion had now arrived. On the 4th of April 1865, Lee evacuated Richmond, and marched away pursued by Grant's victorious army, and the Confederate capital, which had offered so long and firm a resistance, was occupied by the Federal troops. Secession existed no longer except in the two armies of Lee and of Johnson. While Grant went in pursuit of the one, Sherman turned all his efforts against the other. On the 7th, Lee was compelled to surrender. A few days later Sherman, discountenanced by the Government in his effort to bring about an honourable arrangement with his beaten foe, drove Johnson to an unconditional surrender. Sheer lack of men brought the heroic but mistaken struggle of the Confederates to an end. The war had exactly occupied the Presidency of Abraham Lincoln. Secession had followed immediately upon his first election; he had but just entered upon his second term of office when the fall of

Death of Presi-
dent Lincoln.

Richmond completed the triumph of his policy. He did not live to enjoy his victory, or to direct by his wisdom the difficult task of reconstitution which lay before the American people. Ten days after Richmond had been occupied (and before Sherman's work was completed), the pistol of the assassin put an end to his life. A self-made man, he had forced his way step by step up the social scale, and by his sound sense, unswerving determination, and unshaken trust in the strength of the cause he was supporting, enabled his country to weather as terrible a storm as any nation has ever encountered. He has won for himself, by the greatness and simplicity of his character, a place in the affections of the Americans second only to that of the great founder of the Republic.

The Government must have felt extraordinary relief when it was able to declare to the House that belligerent rights were withdrawn, and when it found itself no longer compelled to pursue a course which brought upon it inevitable censure from one side or the other. The

irritation indeed felt by both North and South was so sharp that, whichever party had proved ultimately victorious, some years must have elapsed before friendly relations could be thoroughly established. So excited had both North and South been against the English, that a cessation of hostilities on the basis of a joint war against England had been seriously proposed in the midst of the struggle. Indeed it was perhaps fortunate for the cause of peace that England had withdrawn speedily from a joint expedition in which it had engaged in 1862 with France for the purpose of "restoring order" in Mexico. This phrase, which is not uncommon in English transactions, meant compelling the Mexicans to pay the interest of their debt chiefly held by English and French speculators. The intention of our French allies to force the Imperial form of government upon the Mexicans fortunately led to our withdrawal from active co-operation, and saved us from sharing in the disasters which terminated in the death of the temporary Emperor, Maximilian. The Americans throughout protested against the interference of Europe in American questions. But what they grudgingly put up with from the French, to whom for some reason not very intelligible they felt a certain friendship, might easily have proved too much for their self-restraint had the perpetrators been the hated English.

Apart from political considerations the cessation of the war brought unspeakable relief by alleviating the pressure upon the manufacturing industries of Lancashire. If praise is due to the Government for its calm determination to preserve the neutrality of England in the midst of the strong passions engendered by the war, still greater praise must be given to the Lancashire operatives for the noble resignation with which they bore the suffering inevitably forced upon them by the closing of the Southern ports. With the single exception of a somewhat formidable riot at Staleybridge and Duckingfield, the behaviour of the many thousands of unemployed men, accustomed to high wages, and suddenly reduced by no fault of their own to live on a pittance derived from charity, was marked by sober and orderly self-restraint. By far the larger portion of the cotton used by English manufacturers was derived from the Southern States of America. The cessation of the supply from that source necessitated the stoppage, partial or total, of a large proportion of mills, and the entire withdrawal of work, and consequently of means of subsistence, from many thousand operatives engaged in the cotton manufacture and its dependent trades. That such would be the result of the war had

Irritation of
both North and
South against
England.

The Cotton
Famine.

been foreseen, and Lord Palmerston had early taken measures to encourage as far as possible the arrival of a supply from other cotton-growing countries, such as India, Egypt, and the west coast of Africa. But to force trade into new channels is a work of time; and the different length of the cotton fibre thus introduced necessitated changes in machinery which could not be made at once, and which mill-owners, not certain how soon the war might cease, were naturally unwilling to carry out. By the middle of the year 1862, the pinch had begun to be felt. New Orleans cotton, which even as late as the beginning of the year had been selling at less than a shilling the pound, had nearly doubled in price. The Poor-Law returns began to show a vastly increased number of recipients of parochial relief. There seemed but little chance of a speedy conclusion to the war, and Government thought it wise, as a matter of precaution, to introduce a measure authorising a rate in aid, by which the area of rating was extended so as to relieve the pressure on distressed parishes by the contribution of neighbouring districts. Some opposition was made by Mr. Cobden and others, who preferred that the money should be raised by loan, and the expenditure thus spread over a number of years, during which it was possible that trade might revive. But the general feeling in favour of affording assistance in some shape was so strong that a spirit of conciliation showed itself, and finally a Bill embodying both propositions was passed. When the rates of a parish exceeded 3s. in the pound, it might demand assistance from the general funds of the union; when the rates of a whole union exceeded 3s. in the pound, it might raise loans subject to the approval of the Poor-Law Board, and secured upon the future rates. These measures were renewed the following year with some relaxations. It was well that this precautionary measure was taken. Before the end of the year the distress had largely increased. It apparently reached its highest point at about the close of 1862: in December of that year some 500,000 persons were receiving regular relief, and the weekly loss of wages was estimated at £168,000. From that time onward the suffering began to decrease, and by the close of the following year the number of recipients of relief was reduced more than half. The decrease was due in part to the resumption of work consequent on the increased cotton supply from other than American sources, partly to very considerable emigration, assisted by various colonial and foreign agencies, partly to the absorption of workmen into other trades, and to migration to districts where work was to be found.

Legislative
measures of
relief. July
1862.

Still the maintenance of several hundred thousand unemployed workmen would probably have been a task too great to have been performed by legislative means, had they not been seconded by an extraordinary exhibition of voluntary charity. The undeserved misfortune which had fallen upon the operatives, and the dignified and silent resignation with which they had met it, excited widespread sympathy. At the beginning of the year meetings were held in the great towns of Lancashire which led to the establishment of a central relief committee in Manchester. At the Mansion House in London another committee was established; while besides these two chief agencies many local relief organisations were set on foot. Into the hands of these committees subscriptions drawn from every corner of the English dominions, and even from foreign countries, were lavishly poured. The Colonies, India, Australia, Canada, and every country in Europe, joined in increasing the fund. Nor were money subscriptions alone sent. Food and clothing were given in profusion, and in the midst of her own fierce difficulties America sent more than one ship laden with provisions to the suffering workmen. Mr. Wilson Patten, Member for North Lancashire, in April 1863 stated that the amount received "from every source, was made up as follows: In clothing and provisions £108,000, subscriptions from different localities £306,000, private charity £200,000, Mansion House Committee £482,000, the Central Relief Committee £959,000—in all, £2,055,000; in addition to which there had come from the Poor-Law Board £680,000, making a total of £2,735,000. Of this, £845,000 was still on hand." The distribution of this large sum was carried out with great wisdom, and chiefly gratuitously, by a very complete organisation. A General Committee sat at Manchester, composed of the High Sheriffs and Lord-Lieutenants of the counties, the Bishops whose dioceses included the cotton districts, the Mayors of the municipal boroughs, and a number of other influential men of all ranks, and presided over by the Mayor of Manchester. The actual work was carried on under Lord Derby by an Executive Committee of twenty-four, carefully chosen, so as to consist of men of all political and religious creeds, and of landed proprietors, capitalists, and employers of labour. Under this Committee worked more than a hundred local Committees. The distribution was carried out on the most careful principles. The work was of no common difficulty. In the words of Lord Derby, "The Committees had not only to distribute the alms intrusted to them by public munificence, but so to distribute them

Wise distribu-
tion of the
charitable
subscriptions.

that on the one hand they may not place the honest and industrious on the same footing with the idle and profligate, and on the other hand that they may not abuse public liberality by making their funds contribute to the relief of those who have unexpended means of their own." The view taken of their duties was a liberal one. Their object was to maintain the self-respect of the people, to prevent them from considering themselves as paupers, and to keep the population as far as possible in its old condition ready to take advantage of the first turn of trade. They did not allow the children to be removed from school, but undertook the payment of their fees. They refused to countenance any large application of their funds to the purpose of emigration, although occasionally assisting intending emigrants by personal grants. It can scarcely be questioned that the wide sympathy exhibited by the wealthier classes tended largely to the admirable conduct displayed by the workmen. To this must be added the feeling on their part that they were suffering for a good cause. In the midst of all their misery they never swerved from their desire for the triumph of the Northern States, which meant to them the abolition of slavery. One other measure of relief was attempted with considerable success. The unemployed workmen themselves expressed a wish to receive work rather than charity, and it was found possible to employ with advantage upon useful and necessary works, many of them of a sanitary character, about 20,000 men. A few days' practice was found sufficient to render them efficient labourers, and able to earn at regularly measured work, wages varying from 10s. to 12s. a week. The honest independence of these men is shown by the fact that the money in the savings-bank had been nearly all withdrawn before they came for relief; while the wisdom with which the fund was employed seems proved by the absence of any sickness of an important character during the famine. The opportunity was taken to instruct the people in sanitary arrangements, and to see that they were carried out. Absolute want was so completely staved off, that the Registrar-General in April 1863 could report that "while the deaths had been more numerous than usual elsewhere, the single exception was to be found in that division of England where the staple industry on which half a million of persons were dependent had been overthrown, and for a twelvemonth four-fifths of that number had subsisted, unless the pittance had been aided by previous earnings or sale of household stock, on less than 4d. a day per head. It will be gratefully admitted," he added, "that the legal provision for the distress, and the spontaneous liberality of their countrymen, have hitherto sufficed to maintain the people in health."

It might have been supposed that so severe a blow as the suspension of the American cotton trade would have produced a disastrous effect on the national finances. Such, however, was not the case. In some respects it affected English commerce even advantageously. One of the charges against England most constantly on the lips of the Americans had in it something of truth. The activity of the Confederate privateers had largely crippled the mercantile marine of the Northern States, and thrown much of the carrying trade into English hands. The necessity of making good, if possible, the deficiency of American cotton from other sources, had led to the opening of new, or the extension of old markets. The high prices of cotton and of some other colonial products had given rise to much speculation, and joint-stock trading had received a vast impetus. Certain difficulties and evils had resulted from this. The close of the war caught the speculators unawares, and a good deal of loss and some ruin was the consequence. The trade with new markets not yet accustomed to receive English goods had been chiefly a ready-money trade. The export of bullion had been large, and the bank had been compelled to keep its discount at a very high rate, varying from six to nine per cent. But, although something like a monetary crisis had seemed imminent in 1864, the precautions of the bank had proved sufficient, and the time had been successfully tided over. But the increase of trade, either resulting naturally from the war, or from the speculation it engendered, would scarcely have been sufficient to compensate for the losses it entailed, had it not been for the sound and brilliant system of finance pursued by the Chancellor of the Exchequer throughout his tenure of office.

The removal of all restrictions upon trade and the simplification of the tariff were Mr. Gladstone's primary objects. But the state of Europe in 1859 was not such as to allow of any diminution of the revenue or of any economy in expenditure. On the contrary, there was a strong and rapidly growing feeling that the defence of the country was not adequately provided for, and that larger grants for the army and navy were necessary. There was a general apprehension that an invasion from France was imminent. Lord Lyndhurst had impressed the danger upon the public by a great speech in the House of Lords, and the Premier and the Court undoubtedly shared in the view that large outlay for defensive purposes was required. With this prospect before him, the Chancellor of the Exchequer thought it necessary to avoid this year any diminution of receipts;

VICT.

Brilliant
Finance of
Mr. Gladstone.
Budget of
1859.

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and, even as it was, he calculated the deficiency of receipts as compared with expenditure at over £4,000,000. To supply this want he continued the course, which Sir Robert Peel had begun, of avoiding loans and raising the required sum by direct taxation through the income-tax. The £4,000,000 required he proposed to obtain by raising the tax upon incomes over £150 per annum from 5d. to 9d. As he had previously recognised the inequality of a tax falling alike on precarious and realised incomes, and had spoken of the income-tax as a temporary measure, his propositions naturally laid him open to charges of inconsistency. But he was able to prove to the satisfaction of the House the necessity of his measures, and to secure the acceptance of his Budget.

With the exception of the determination which it showed to meet the charges of the year by the receipts of the year, there was nothing of a very striking nature in the Budget of 1859. It was not till the following year that Mr. Gladstone was enabled to give full effect to his principles. In the autumn of 1859 negotiations for a Commercial

Commercial
Treaty with
France.

Treaty with France were set on foot. They were intrusted to the management of Mr. Cobden. The Emperor of the French had himself accepted the doctrines of free-trade. But the opinion of his subjects was too strongly in favour of protection to allow him to act fully in accordance with his views. His object in negotiating the Commercial Treaty was to obtain as great an extension of free-trade principles as was compatible with this state of public opinion. In exchange for every relaxation made by the French, a corresponding advantage was to be obtained from England. For the full success of free-trade its universal adoption is necessary. But as the English financiers believed that every advance in that direction was a distinct advantage, they hailed with pleasure the opportunity of enforcing by treaty even its partial adoption. France engaged to reduce, partly in the current year, partly in the following year, the duties on nearly every article of English production, so that no duty upon any one of those articles should hereafter exceed thirty per cent. *ad valorem*. An immense market was thus thrown open to England. On the other side, England engaged, in the words of Mr. Gladstone, "to abolish immediately and totally all duties upon all manufactured goods, with a limited power of exception which was to be exercised only with regard to two or three articles. There will be a sweep, summary, entire, and absolute, of the duty on what are known as manufactured goods, from the face of the British tariff." Further,

the duty on brandy from foreign countries was to be equalised to the Colonial duties, a change from 15s. to 8s. 2d. a gallon; and a very large reduction was to be made on the duties on foreign wines. The Treaty had been made during the recess, and therefore still wanted Parliamentary ratification. But as the Budget ^{Budget of 1860.} was framed entirely with reference to it, Mr. Gladstone took a very early opportunity of producing his financial schemes along with the Treaty. On the 10th of February, in a speech of extraordinary effectiveness, he explained the Government propositions. Although the expenses of the Chinese war had reduced the surplus for the current year to the small sum of £65,000, an unusual diminution of the public charges caused by the termination of annuities and amounting to more than £2,000,000 seemed to afford a good opportunity for reducing taxation. But the object which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had in view was not the immediate reduction of taxation, but rather such alterations and reforms in the customs as should tend to increase the wealth of the nation, and render it more able to bear its burdens. The action of the French Treaty would at first cause a considerable loss, still further likely to be increased by the changes in the tariff which were in contemplation. Altogether, setting the losses caused by the decreased tariff against the advantages derived from lessened cost of collection, and a somewhat increased consumption, the diminution in the revenue arising from the proposed alterations could not be estimated at less than £2,108,000. In addition to this the very high duty on tea and sugar was a war tax, and must therefore naturally cease; while if the income-tax, also a temporary tax, was allowed to drop, the whole amount of deficit from changed tariff and lapsed duties would reach the formidable sum of £11,508,000. Instead therefore of allowing the temporary taxes to lapse, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to continue for fifteen months at their present high rate the duties upon tea and sugar, and to renew the income-tax at 10d. in the pound. The effect of his proposed changes in simplifying the tariff, Mr. Gladstone stated as follows: "In 1845 the articles subject to customs duties were 1163. In 1853 the number had been reduced to 460, and in 1859 to 419. After the changes now proposed are adopted, the whole number of articles remaining on the tariff will be 48. There would be a relief from indirect taxation of about £4,000,000. And with a very limited exception there would be a final disappearance of all protective and differential duties, and the consumer would know that every shilling he paid would go to the revenue." In the course of

his speech, Mr. Gladstone said that he believed the effect of the tariff in 1861 and 1862 would be to enrich the revenue to a much greater extent than many anticipated. The prophecy was abundantly fulfilled. Though the Commercial Treaty was only in operation during a part of the year, the value of British goods exported to France had increased from £4,754,000 to £7,145,000, and the following year it had risen to no less than £9,210,000.

The Budget, admirable though it was, and great as was the approbation lavished upon the speech with which it was introduced, was destined not to pass into law, and its rejection involving a constitutional question of some importance excited a strong feeling against the Upper House. Among the duties to be removed was that upon paper. The repeal of this tax, which was regarded as a sop thrown to the more Radical party in the country, had encountered a determined opposition in the House of Commons, based upon the ground that under existing circumstances, when large reductions of the customs were suggested, and unusual expenditure on the military services seemed necessary, it was unwise to part with so large and steady a source of revenue. And this opinion appeared to gain ground, for whereas on the second reading of the Bill repealing the tax the Government had a majority of more than fifty, on the third reading the majority had dwindled to nine. This, no doubt, encouraged the Lords to oppose the Budget. It was however so well established a constitutional practice to leave the management of the finances in the hands of the Lower House, that it was thought necessary to vindicate the rights of the Lords on this occasion. Lord Lyndhurst in a weighty speech asserted (what was no doubt the constitutional law in the matter) that the initiation of financial legislation lay with the Commons, that the Lords had no right to alter or to reject a part of a Money Bill, but that they had the right to reject it as a whole; as the remission of the paper-tax came before them as a separate Bill, it was within their power to reject it while accepting the rest of the Budget. There was however this peculiarity in the present case, as was pointed out on behalf of Government by Lord Cranworth, that this was a Bill for relief, and not for increase of taxation. The Lords took Lord Lyndhurst's view as to their rights, and the view of the Opposition as to the policy of the Bill, and negatived it by a majority of eighty-nine. This result produced great excitement. By many it was thought that the remission of the tax was so hazardous that the Lords had exercised a wise discretion in rejecting it; nor, though it was allowed that in

so doing they might have acted in opposition to the spirit of the Constitution, could they be said to have gone beyond their strict rights. But to the more advanced Liberals, supported by the cheap Press whose interest was largely involved, it seemed that a severe blow had been struck at the majesty of the Commons, and a loud clamour was raised which might easily have produced a formidable contest between the Houses. The Lords had in fact put themselves in the somewhat odious position of obstructing a remission of taxation which the Commons had thought desirable, and in which they alone were primarily interested. That the dispute produced no bad result was due to the tact of Lord Palmerston. While the public were expecting some violent assertion on the part of the Cabinet, whose financial projects had been wrecked, Lord Palmerston first suggested that a committee should be appointed to report on precedents, and immediately upon their report, which was produced the same evening, he gave notice of three resolutions, asserting—First, the right of the Commons alone to grant aids and supplies, and to limit them as to matter, manner, measure, and time; secondly, that although the Lords had sometimes exercised the power of rejecting such Bills by negativing the whole of them, such conduct was justly regarded by the Commons with peculiar jealousy; and, thirdly, that the House had in its own hands the power so to impose and remit taxes as to maintain its rights inviolate. These judicious resolutions—which vindicated the rights of the Commons, allowed the rights of the Lords, and pointed out a way by which they could be harmonised—were successfully passed through the House, and the storm was allayed. Some further effort was made to reawaken the question. But Mr. Gladstone, although protesting against the proceedings of the House of Lords, which he stigmatised as “a gigantic innovation,” supported his chief in allowing the question to rest for the present, and contented himself with triumphantly carrying against the Opposition the rearrangement of the customs.

The interest attending the Budget of 1860 was but little diminished when Mr. Gladstone produced his financial proposals for the following year. It still remained to be seen whether he could press his system for the reduction of indirect taxation further, and whether he would take the opportunity to renew his contest with the Lords on the Paper Bill. He estimated for the coming year that there would be a surplus of nearly £2,000,000. This he proposed to employ in repealing the duty on paper, and in

Opposition to
the Budget.

Dispute
between the
Houses avoided
by Lord
Palmerston's
resolutions.

Budget of
1861.

taking off the penny which had been added to the income-tax in 1860. It was again the remission of the tax on paper which excited most attention. A successful agitation had been carried on during the autumn and winter, and, although it could be done only at the price of maintaining for a while the unpopular duty on tea, the people were on the whole determined that the remission should this year be carried. The more eager partisans of the rights of the Commons urged that the Bill should be sent up as before, and the quarrel renewed. But Mr. Gladstone wisely took advantage of the suggestion contained in the resolutions of the preceding year, and declared his intention of throwing all the propositions of the Budget into one Bill, which the Lords must either accept or reject in its entirety. The aristocratic portion of the House, and the Conservatives always inclined to support the Peers, strongly opposed this course. It was by a majority of only fifteen in a crowded House that it was accepted. But the majority though small was decisive, the Opposition yielded, and the Peers passed the Bill. The remarks with which Mr. Gladstone closed his speech are unusually interesting, as marking the divergence between his views and those of his political leader, and his dread of financial prodigality. While congratulating the House upon the general condition of the country, he thought it necessary to raise a note of warning against the danger which lay "in an increased susceptibility to excitement, and in proneness to constant and apparently boundless augmentations of expenditure." He was alarmed lest the very success of his measures should produce recklessness, and remove all obstacles to that increased outlay on warlike preparations, for which, under the name of "national defences," a large part of the nation was calling. No less a sum than £9,000,000 was thought necessary for this purpose, a sum which it was determined to raise by gradually contracted loans. It was no wonder that a prudent financier looked askance at so grave an infraction of one of his fundamental principles, or that a statesman already leaning towards the Radicals disliked the attitude of military competition which this vast expenditure appeared to imply. Unfortunately neither the financial schemes nor the pacific intentions of Mr. Gladstone were allowed free play. The outbreak of the American civil war rendered even increased expenditure upon our army necessary for our safety as a neutral. The despatch of troops to Canada after the affair of the *Trent* cost no less than a million, and the cotton famine dealt a blow at the most prosperous industry of the country.

It was under grave disadvantages that the Budget of 1862 was

produced. Yet it proved by no means unsatisfactory. Already the Commercial Treaty with France was beginning to show its effect. Within a single year our export trade with that country had increased with gigantic strides; while in spite of the enormous loss on American trade, the general prosperity of the country ^{Budgets of 1862 and 1863.} was such that there was an increase in the revenue of not less than £2,000,000. The additional expenses incident upon the war had, however, eaten up this increase. With only £150,000 in hand, and with the probability of the continuation of similar expenses, there was no possibility of introducing any important changes in the Budget. In fact the seed had been already sown, and for the next few years there was little to do but to reap the harvest. In 1863, the estimated surplus was £3,741,000, caused partly by increased receipts, partly by diminished expenditure upon the army and navy, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was able at last to diminish the taxes on which he had relied to supply the deficiency arising from the great reductions in the customs. The duty on tea, the reduction of which the Opposition had always urged against those reductions actually made, was brought down to 1s. in the pound, and a penny was taken off the income-tax, which thus fell to the same rate as when originally proposed by Sir Robert Peel. These alterations, which were the chief propositions of the Budget, were most favourably received. They had indeed been generally expected. Some additional propositions by the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not find the same general favour. Those whom he addressed were too closely interested in the club-life of London society to confess the justice of classing clubs with other places for the supply of wines and liquors, and the proposal to tax them had to be withdrawn. Nor did the public approve of including under the action of the income-tax charitable property. Mr. Gladstone's exposition of the wasteful expenditure which often attended the possession of such property, and the strong assertion of his disbelief in the supposition that taxation would limit their efficiency, failed to convince his hearers. The alterations made by the Budget were therefore restricted to its two main features, the reduction of the income-tax and of the duty upon tea. It was the exposition of the state of the country rather than the originality of the Budget which gave it its interest. Mr. Gladstone was able triumphantly to point out the success of the system he had followed. Both the import and the manufacture of paper in England had largely increased, and the export had in one year risen by 34,000 cwt. An increased revenue of £30,000 had

been derived from the lessened wine-duties, while the Commercial Treaty, the effect of which upon a whole year's revenue was now for the first time visible, had been successful almost beyond belief. It had more than compensated for the loss of the American trade; for although we had by a strange change of fortune been supplying the United States with cotton, the loss in the value of exports to America had been £6,000,000 during the past year. If with the export of British goods the indirect export of colonial produce into France was included, our trade with that country showed an increase of more than £12,000,000 in the same time. But looking beyond that single success the increase of the wealth of the country, as shown by the income-tax, was even more extraordinary. In 1842 the assessed income was £156,000,000; in 1861, upon the very same area, the assessed income was £221,000,000, and that increase had arisen during the latter part of the period. "In ten years, from 1842 to 1852, the taxable income of the country increased by six per cent., but in eight years, from 1853 to 1861, the income of the country again increased by twenty per cent.; that is a fact so strange as to be almost incredible. . . . The real and new cause which has been in operation has been the legislation of Parliament setting free the industry and intelligence of the British people." Mr. Gladstone thought himself able to add that he had reason to believe that the average condition of the British labourer had improved during the last twenty years in a manner unparalleled in the history of any country.

The Budgets of the two succeeding years were little more than repetitions of those of 1863. On both occasions in introducing them, Mr. Gladstone emphasised the extraordinary advance of national wealth, and traced it directly to the system which he had pursued. In each case he had a surplus of more than £2,000,000 to deal with; in each he was enabled to reduce the income-tax, till in 1865 its rate was only 4d. in the pound. Originally established as a temporary tax to cover deficiencies and allow of great alterations in commercial legislation, the income-tax might now be regarded as a fixed source of revenue; and although Mr. Gladstone frankly pointed out its faults and dangers, its rough justice, its inquisitorial character, the temptation to extravagance in Government which it afforded, he concluded that at this low rate, and sparing as it did the income of the labourer and the artisan, it was a just and valuable piece of fiscal machinery. In 1864 this reduction was coupled with a reduction of the sugar-duties, in 1865 with a still further reduction of the duty upon tea. In both years the Opposition pressed the

Budgets of
1864 and 1865.

superior claims to reduction of the malt-tax, which was said to press heavily upon the agricultural interest. But on this point Mr. Gladstone was firm. Its repeal would cost the revenue a very heavy loss, the advantage to the consumer would be scarcely perceptible, nor was it desirable that spirits and beer should be freed from tax if any indirect tax at all was to be preserved. A concession to the agricultural interest was however made by freeing from duty malt used as food for cattle.

Successful finance such as this, the maintenance of peace the fruits of which were already to be seen in the lowered military estimates, the absorption of general interest in the critical condition both of Europe and America, and the constant growth of material wealth, satisfied the wishes of the governing classes, and checked all tendency to move exciting questions. This quiescent feeling was still further fostered by the certain prospect that before long the veteran statesman, who was thus peacefully closing a career marked at one time by extreme activity and pugnacity, must soon retire from the management of affairs. Burning questions might wait till he had passed away, and his more ardent successor had found freer opportunity to give effect to his own ideas. The dissolution in July of the Parliament, which had now been sitting for six years, would alone have reopened the discussion of the political questions which had been slumbering so long. But the advent of a stormier time was rendered still more certain when in October Lord Palmerston, whose health had been for some time fading, died at the ripe age of eighty-one; and thus the cessation of party warfare, and the apparent political apathy caused by the general acquiescence with which his government had been received, came to an end.

Political
apathy during
these years.

Death of Lord
Palmerston.
Oct. 18, 1865.

The death of Lord Palmerston was the more important because there was every probability that the Prime Minister would in future be more completely master of the Government than had of late years been the case. In December 1861 the Prince Consort had died in the full vigour of his age. Occupying no official position, and unrecognised in any theory of the Constitution, the Prince as confidential adviser and secretary of the Queen had for many years exercised a paramount influence. Although at times the object of considerable popular jealousy, there is every reason to believe that the influence thus gained was beneficially and wisely employed. Full of the best German traditions, he held, in common with the greatest rulers of the Prussian

Effect of the
death of Prince
Albert.

House, that the possession of the Crown, on the importance of which he laid great stress, brought with it corresponding duties of the severest kind. The constitutional government of England appeared to him but a somewhat modified expression of the same view. He mastered the system with an ease rarely found in foreigners, and fully accepted its principles. The permanence of the Crown in the midst of shifting administrations he considered of peculiar importance in supporting the continuity of foreign policy, while at home the possession of the traditions of government, and the knowledge of precedent which its experience gave, were fitted to render it a most useful element of stability. The Prince used his power to give reality to these advantages; and undoubtedly under his guidance the political importance of the Sovereign was largely increased. The unanimous testimony of all who came in contact with him bears witness to his unflagging industry in mastering the political questions of the day, to the constant assistance which his knowledge and experience afforded to the Foreign Ministers of both parties, and to the completeness with which the Queen acted in every difficult crisis upon his advice. Nor was it only politically that the loss of the Prince Consort was felt. He had devoted himself with rare success to the improvement and culture of the people, and most of the advance in artistic taste, in love of music, and in general appreciation of what is beautiful, on which the country can justly pride itself, is due directly or indirectly to his influence. To the Queen his loss was irreparable. It is impossible as yet to estimate her influence upon public affairs since her husband's death, but it may be safely said, that while she has borne herself so as to win the respect of all parties, and attempted to follow the line of conduct which he would have advised, the severe shock which his death caused her, and her consequent partial withdrawal from public life, have lessened the political power of the Crown, and directed the love and respect of her people rather to her qualities as a woman, than to her ability as a reigning Queen.

The questions which were apparently to assume prominence in the new Parliament were the reform of the representation, and the position of the English Church. In May 1865 Mr. Disraeli, in view of the impending dissolution, had issued an address to the electors of Buckinghamshire. Ignoring the quiescent period which had since

Disraeli's election speech.
May 1865.

elapsed, he narrated the failure of the last Conservative Government to pass measures on Church rates, and on the enlargement of the Parliamentary suffrage. The present Administration had been formed, he said, pledged to the

total abolition of Church rates, and to a measure of Parliamentary Reform which should secure the lowering of the borough franchise. Implying, though not distinctly asserting, that neither of those pledges had been redeemed, he indicated these two subjects—the one involving the maintenance of the National Church, and the other the maintenance of the ancient Constitution of England—as the chief topics of party discussion in the new Parliament. He would not have thus emphasised the importance of the Church, had he not known the efficiency for electoral purposes of the cry of “the Church in danger,” and recognised that there were circumstances which would give it a certain plausibility.

For the English Church had been passing through a very critical period. The great Tractarian movement had been for a time productive of complete anarchy. The tenets of its supporters, the stress which they laid upon the authority of the Church and tradition, excited the bitter hostility of the Evangelicals, who regarded the Bible as the sole paramount authority. The discussions which necessarily arose upon this point, far from weakening the liberalism against which the Tractarian movement was at first avowedly aimed, gave rise to a party within the Church which rested its creeds on critical inquiry, and was characterised as the Broad Church. At the same time, the æsthetic tastes and love of mediævalism of the Tractarians drove many of them to excesses of ritual, which separated them from the older High Church party. Four or five distinct sections thus arose in the Church. Yet in the midst of this disintegration, the teaching of the Tractarians had produced a decided effect. The theory of the importance of the Church was so acceptable to the clergy that it speedily made its way among them, and High and Low joined in the stoutest defence of orthodoxy. The æsthetic teaching which had accompanied the Tractarian movement was also so reasonable and attractive, that its effect was universally felt. There were, no doubt, certain extremes adopted by a few who became known as Ritualists. But setting these aside, great and valuable reforms were very generally adopted. Old churches were restored, and stripped of the galleries and pews which defaced them, new Gothic churches were everywhere built, and surplised choirs and musical services introduced. With regard to the relation between Church and State, there was more diversity of opinion. Yet the greater number of the clergy, even though many of them were convinced of the justice of the claims of the Church to independence, and were eager to support its spiritual authority, contented themselves with

Effects of the
Tractarian
movement.

attempts to give life to their meetings in Convocation, and submitted, though with much grumbling, to the temporal authority of the Privy Council. But there were a few who began to think the tyranny unsupportable, and desired disestablishment. On the laity, on the other hand, the increasing pretensions of the Church were producing a strong effect. They inevitably roused a feeling of antagonism among those who did not accept them. The Church appeared to be forcing itself more and more into the position of an exclusive sect, and thus laid itself open to such attacks as were implied in the constant efforts to get rid of Church rates, and to open the churchyards to dissenters.

The publication of two books of liberal tendency afforded the ground on which the divided opinions of the Church exhibited them-

*Rise of the
Broad Church.*

selves. The echoes of the disputes arising from them filled the whole of Lord Palmerston's Ministry. In 1860 a series of Essays by authors well known in the Oxford world made its appearance. The publication was attended by a notice that the writers were not acting in union, and were responsible for their own writings only, but as all the Essays were conceived much in the same spirit, the work was regarded with some justice as a declaration of the views of the Broad Church. The Essays contained little, if anything, that had not been said before either in Germany or in England, but their tone, the free handling of Scripture which they appeared to recommend, and the application to the Bible of the ordinary methods of criticism which they adopted, were something new within the limits of the English Church, and emanating as they did from men of such distinction as Dr. Temple, Dr. Williams, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Baden Powell, Mr. Mark Pattison, and Professor Jowett, the Essays excited an amount of interest and hostility which perhaps they scarcely deserved. The clergy at once assumed an attitude of active hostility to them. Largely signed petitions prayed the Archbishops to devise means for banishing from the Church the authors of such heresies, and the matter was brought forward in Convocation. But

*Excitement
caused by
Essays and
Reviews.*

suits being instituted against Dr. Rowland Williams and Mr. Wilson, the question became a legal one. A decision in the Ecclesiastical Courts incriminating both writers on two points, though absolving them on the rest of the articles alleged against them, produced an appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The judgment of the Committee delivered by Lord Westbury, and based upon strict legal grounds, reversed the judgments of the Courts below; it had not been proved, in the opinion of the Privy Council, that the assertions of the Essayists had

either contradicted, or been plainly inconsistent with, the Articles or Formularies of the English Church. With this opinion however the leaders of the clergy, the Archbishops, did not agree, and in spite of it they issued pastoral letters in accordance with their own opinions. The vast majority of the clergy agreed with the Archbishops, and at length, in June 1864, both Houses of Convocation formally declared "a synodical condemnation" of the volume, "as containing teaching contrary to the doctrine of the United Church of England and Ireland, in common with the whole Catholic Church of Christ." No action of Convocation is valid without the consent of the Crown; and the legality of this judgment was questioned in the House of Lords, where Lord Houghton inquired whether the Government intended to take any steps in consequence of what had been done. An opportunity was thus given to Lord Westbury to explain the legal position of Convocation. He used his opportunity somewhat mercilessly, and spoke in a bitter and jeering tone, which did much to increase the dislike of the clergy for that lay supremacy under which many of them were already fretting. The subordination of the Church could scarcely be expressed in harsher terms than those which the Lord Chancellor employed. "There are three modes," he said, "of dealing with Convocation when it is permitted to come into action and transact real business. The first is, while they are harmlessly busy, to take no notice of their proceedings; the second is, when they seem likely to get into mischief, to prorogue and put an end to their proceedings; and the third, when they have done something clearly beyond their powers, is to bring them before a Court of Justice and punish them." The Lord Chancellor pointed out, however, that the drawing of the judgment was such as to render it practically nugatory, and contemptuously explained that the Government had no intention of interfering. But though thwarted in the Courts of Law, and brought up rudely in their attempt to give independent effect to their action in Convocation, the orthodox party believed that in Oxford an opening for a more successful assault upon their opponents was offered. Dr. Pusey, Dr. Ogilvie, and Dr. Heurtley combined to institute a suit against Professor Jowett in the Chancellor's Court, for heresy. It marks the advance of the High Church party that Dr. Pusey had himself been suspended, in 1843, for heterodoxy, and that Dr. Ogilvie, now acting with him, had taken a personal share in his condemnation. The case was tried before Mr. Mountague Bernard, Assessor in the Court. The objection that the Court had no jurisdiction in spiritual matters was overruled; but the Assessor went on

to declare that it was not fitting that the case should be carried any further. The general feeling against any form of religious persecution, and the desire, among the laity at all events, to avoid any restriction of the wide inclusiveness which is the chief advantage of a National Church, was too strong to be disregarded.

Meanwhile Dr. Colenso had in 1862 published a work upon the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua which still further illustrated the growth of liberal opinion within the Church, while the disputes arising from its publication brought into still greater prominence the difficulties which beset the relations of Church and State. The Bishop's work was a rationalistic criticism of the Pentateuch, leading to the conclusion that large portions of these books were not strictly historical. The Colonial Metropolitan, the Bishop of Cape Town, pronounced sentence of deposition against Dr. Colenso, who then brought his case to England. He was received with great animosity by the English clergy. A Committee of the Upper House of Convocation was appointed to inquire into his book, most of the Bishops inhibited him from preaching in their dioceses, the Archbishop warned his clergy against him. Against this treatment Colenso raised a protest; he was being judged, he declared, unheard. But eventually, in May 1864, his petition against the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Cape Town came before the Privy Council, and in February of the next year the Lord Chancellor pronounced judgment. He carefully avoided settling the doctrinal points at issue, but declared the proceedings of the Bishop of Cape Town null and void. By strict interpretation of law, neither the See of Natal nor the See of Cape Town existed at all; the Bishops held their position under patent from the Crown, and the Crown had no power to create a Bishopric in a colony possessing an independent legislature. The decision, strictly legal as it was, seemed to leave the questions at issue untouched, and gave Dr. Pusey the opportunity of expressing his pleasure at finding that the Church of Africa was thus free, and emphasising his opinion that the temporal jurisdiction was the great source of weakness of the Church of England. In fact, if these two cases brought into strong relief the value of a final appeal to a lay jurisdiction capable of interposing an obstacle in the way of persecution, they rendered no less obvious the powerlessness of the Church in matters of discipline and doctrine. It was only natural, that men who set great store upon the authority of the Church should begin to desire for it a position of more independence. On the other hand, the loud and somewhat illiberal clamour which had been raised, and

Action against
Bishop Colenso.

the questionable steps which had been taken to enforce Church authority, led many thinking men to dread the predominance of clerical influence, and, in face of the evident determination of the Church to oppose itself to the progress of thought, to question the possibility of its existence except as one among many religious sects.

The efforts repeated year by year to obtain the abolition of Church rates were a further source of anxiety to those who were eager for the complete maintenance of the Church. For many years the imposition of a tax for the support of the Church fabric on all householders of a parish, whatever might be their religious opinions, had been exceedingly distasteful. In many parishes in the North of England it had been practically dropped. The decision of the Law Courts in 1843, in the case of the parish of Braintree, had affirmed the legality of such a tax, though imposed by a minority of the parishioners. Legal relief being thus unobtainable, the matter had been brought before Parliament, and divisions had been taken, showing an increasing feeling in favour of the total abolition of the rate. But Mr. Disraeli had thrown himself strongly upon the side of the Church, and had declared that the existence of a National Church was involved in the maintenance of the rate. The support thus given had enabled the defenders of Church rates to withstand the threatened measure. But it was only by the narrowest majorities. In 1861 Sir John Trelawny's Bill for the abolition of Church rates had been rejected only by the casting vote of the Speaker; in the following year an adverse amendment was carried by a majority of one; and in 1863 an increase to a majority of ten in favour of the maintenance of the rates was regarded as a great triumph. The parties were, however, sufficiently closely balanced to give colour to Mr. Disraeli's assertion that the Church was threatened.

Not less well-grounded was the implied censure on the sluggishness of the late Ministry, contained in Mr. Disraeli's speech. The Government, which had so long been in power, had deceived the hopes of its more advanced supporters by ceasing, after its one weak effort, to speak of the question of Reform at all. Again and again Mr. Locke King and Sir E. Baines had attempted, as private members, to bring about a reduction both of the county and borough franchises. In every case the Government had found means either to reject the proposed measures, or to avoid the question. An answer had always been found in the fact that there were no visible signs of strong agitation among the working men; yet it was known that two at least of the Cabinet, and those two the

Efforts to
abolish Church
rates.

Revival of
political
interests.

most important members of it, felt that some extension of the franchise was necessary. To Lord Russell the completion of the measure he had initiated in 1832 was a matter of conscience, and Mr. Gladstone had somewhat astonished the world by his assertion, in the year 1864, that he too regarded an extensive Reform Bill as necessary, and that, so far from thinking the absence of agitation a reason against it, he saw a truer wisdom in doing what he considered an act of justice before it was called for, rather than in waiting for an agitation which could not but rouse angry passions, and be carried on with immense loss to the working class. It was certain that if the Liberals obtained a majority in the new elections, a Reform Bill would be imminent. It was equally certain that the introduction of such a Bill would lead to a split in the Liberal party. The language of Mr. Lowe made it plain that some at least among those who had followed Lord Palmerston believed that the want of agitation implied want of wish, and that an extension of the franchise to a lower class was in itself an evil. But in fact, the reason for the apparent want of interest among the working classes in political matters was to be found in their absorption in questions of a different sort, and it was this probably which influenced Mr. Lowe.

Aware that no political change was at the time possible, of sufficient completeness to allow of legislative interference in their favour, the workmen were devoting all their attention and energy to free themselves from the tyranny of capital. It is impossible that political reforms affecting the poorer classes should be undertaken without bringing to the surface and emphasising social questions. The upper classes and the well-to-do find interest in mere political

questions, in the play of Party, and in the possession of power. But working men, though by no means devoid of political views, are apt to regard the questions that arise chiefly from their own point of view, and to desire the power which political status gives chiefly as a means of rectifying the social evils from which they suffer. So it happened now. The awakening which the national conscience had undergone on the passing of the Reform Bill had not been confined to politics, but had touched social questions of all sorts. The great Bill could not be considered as final. Its very principle that the franchise should be extended to all who were fit to exercise it implied the admission of class after class as they acquired that fitness. But such a process of absorption is necessarily slow and gradual. As a matter of fact it was the middle class which had reaped nearly all the benefits of the

Practical
politics of the
working
classes.

change. The great and beneficial alterations in commercial policy had added enormously to the wealth and power of the trader and producer. But the very success which had attended them had led to a one-sided admiration of the principles which had been developed, and to an unquestioning worship of that form of political economy which regards the welfare of the country as dependent chiefly on the amount of its riches, and leaves the distribution of the riches acquired to the free play of competition. This system appears to give undue power to the capitalist and employer, and to throw the workman helpless into his hands. For, as the object aimed at, the acquisition of riches, depends upon the difference between the cost of production and the price obtainable for the finished article, it is obvious that cheapness of production is desirable; and, as labour is one of the chief elements in production, the cheapness of labour becomes a prime necessity. There thus arises, on the part of the capitalist, the desire to pay as little as possible for the labour he employs, and a complete severance follows of the interests of capital and labour. As a result a bitter antagonism springs up between those whose interests are in fact identical, and who in the nature of things should act in the closest partnership. If such a contest is allowed to follow its natural course, the workmen must inevitably be beaten, and the tyranny of capital be established. The weakness of labour in the struggle arises from the necessity under which the workman lies to find an immediate sale for his labour, which is the sole commodity he has to offer. To fail in finding this immediate market means starvation. The man possessing capital, or the means of immediately employing labour, is therefore master of the situation. On the part of the workman it is a case of forced sale; and if worked to its extreme, the system, supposing, as is the fact, that labour is superabundant, obliges the workman to accept anything the capitalist offers him. He must accept this or starve. The limit of wages with free competition is therefore only reached when it is so low that the workman thinks it better to risk the chance of starvation than to work on such miserable terms. The limitation of competition would appear to be the only possible cure for such a state of things. It arises naturally in the case of skilled labour; the supply is not unlimited, the competition is not complete. For the limited supply the capitalists compete among themselves; the price of it, that is the wages, are raised. But competition can also be limited by an agreement among the workmen to raise the amount of payment which they think preferable to starvation. If the workmen in any given trade

Tyranny of
capital.

will combine, and refuse to accept less than a certain wage, the capitalist requiring their services must give it, or lose the advantage of the employment of his capital.

It is upon these principles that Trades Unions were founded, and strikes became an institution. The workmen had early seen that combination was a means of advancing their interest. But the law had been very hard upon such combinations. They were treated and punished as conspiracies. The natural result followed; they became conspiracies, attended with outrage and the exhibition of bitter animosity between employer and employed. As early as 1826 the severity of the law against combinations in restraint of trade had been softened by statute. Subsequent legislation had carried this improvement further, and as Friendly Societies the Trades Unions were now recognised. A better field for the development of the plans of the workmen had thus been opened, and it was in this direction, rather than towards political improvement, that their attention was now largely directed. The spread of Trades-unionism had been wide and rapid. In 1861 such societies existed in 405 towns, and numbered nearly 2000. Their annual income was over £1,000,000, and they included a large majority of skilled workmen. Though still regarded by many people with much dislike and mistrust, and often spoken of in terms of most unwarranted reprobation, they were for the most part well-organised, well-managed societies, in the hands of very able men, the flower of the class. Their leaders were true representatives freely elected; paid agitators though often spoken of scarcely existed. The management in which many shared was an excellent political training. Their principles, which forbade overtime, and led to an equalisation of wages, required in the better workman much self-denial, and in the general mass of Unionists much self-restraint, and a spirit of discipline and obedience. Under their influence, in spite of many apparent failures, great improvements had been secured. The weapon they employed was the strike, or organised refusal of a body of workmen to accept work till their demands were granted. Those demands were usually a rise of wages or shorter hours, and sometimes both.

It might seem that such a process entirely turned the tables, and placed the tyranny in the hands of the workmen. But in that direction also a limit exists, and the rise of wages must come to an end when it reaches that point at which the capitalist would prefer to lose the use of his capital, rather than pay the sum demanded. A strike thus became a rude method of settling

Rise of Trades
Unions.

Strikes and
Lock-outs.

what the wages of a certain trade should be. Ignorance of the state of trade, and of the amount of profits earned by their employers, frequently misled the workmen; they demanded more than the employers would or could give, and consequently failed. But not unfrequently the event proved that their judgment had been right, and they obtained the object for which they had struck. It was not to be expected that a great combined action, entailing much individual suffering and loss, could be carried out by men, the mass of whom were but little educated, without some disorder and some violence. Non-unionist men, who were brought to fill the vacant places, were sometimes ill-used; a silent but very effective coercion was brought to bear on men who would gladly have continued their work; and occasional disturbances arose among the unemployed workmen. Of these the masters made the most. To the strikes they opposed the lock-out. They closed their yards and factories, in order to throw upon the funds of the Unions the burden of supporting the ejected workmen. It was thus hoped that necessity would drive the strikers to yield. Every attempt was made to rouse public opinion on behalf of the capitalist, by emphasising the folly of the workman who lost his wages, by exaggerating the disorders among the unemployed, and by threatening England with permanent disaster if the course of trade was thus interrupted, and the price of production forced up. But the workmen found eloquent defenders, and among them Mr. Bright, the chief apostle of free-trade and competition. In more than one great speech he vindicated the Trades Unions, and recognised that strikes were justifiable. "It has never yet been proved," he said in 1860, "that Trades Unions or Strikes are always bad. I daresay that in nine cases out of ten, for aught I know in ninety out of a hundred, a strike had better be avoided. But the strike is the reserved power, and if I were a working man, I should never say I would surrender my right in combination with others to take such steps as are legal and moral for the advancement of my interests, and the interests of those who worked with me." Strikes were for some years constant in nearly every trade throughout the north of England. Those which excited most attention were that of the Amalgamated Engineers in 1852; the strike in Preston in 1854, in which, after a resistance of thirty-seven weeks, the strikers were beaten; the builders' strike in 1859, for a reduction of work to nine hours; and in 1865, the strike in the iron trade in North Staffordshire. The masters of South Staffordshire on that occasion came to the support of their fellows in the North, and blew out their furnaces in the hope of compelling the men to yield.

But after several months they found it necessary for their own interest one by one to yield, and the men were triumphant.

Divested of its rough exterior, and of those repulsive incidents connected with it which brought it into such evil repute, Trades-unionism would seem to be a very earnest, even a noble, effort for the improvement of the position of the working classes. The present economic divisions are accepted by it; there is no desire of the working man to encroach upon the advantages or duties of capital; the state of the workman is recognised as honourable. As both capital and labour are requisite for production, there should be no antagonism between the two; they should co-operate. But the peculiar condition of one of the constituents in this partnership is its need of immediate returns, and its incapacity to bear the shocks of variable trade. It requires to be secured a permanent and regular, if small share, of the joint advantage of production, and to be guarded from all unnecessary risks and dangers. The duty of capital is to supply these needs. Its enormous advantages should go hand in hand with large responsibilities, while the disadvantages of the workmen should be counterbalanced by freedom from responsibility, by steady and equable payments, and by employment so limited as to leave time for the enjoyments of life and the cultivation of the qualities which a citizen should possess. To secure these ends, to diminish competition among the workmen themselves, and to ensure a more wide diffusion of employment, the points insisted on by the Trades-unionists were the minimum of wages and the suppression of overtime and piecework—demands which require great self-denial on the part of the better workmen,—the limitation of the hours of work, and the removal of reckless management which, for the sake of a little larger profit, frequently risked the workman's life. It is unfortunate that the high ground of theory occupied by the admirers of Trades-unionism was frequently, in fact very generally, deserted by the men themselves. They neither understood the theory nor did they in any way reduce it to practice, but acted neither better nor worse than the generality of men, putting before themselves as their avowed object to get as much as possible for their labour—the commodity they had to sell—and giving as little as possible in exchange for their wages. The means which they employed not unfrequently as will be seen subsequently degenerated into rude brutality.

The second great effort in which the working classes were engaged for the purpose of improving their condition rested on very different

Good effected
by Trades-
unionism.

principles. It depended, like Trades-unionism, upon combination, and took to itself the title of Co-operation. There is little doubt that it had its origin in views of a ^{Rise of} socialistic character; and the enthusiasm and self-denial with which it was supported, the almost sacred character with which its principles were invested by those who held them, are proofs of the true and vigorous instincts of the working men. When co-operation first made its appearance it was in close union with a desire for education, temperance, and thrift, and was connected with all the great liberal movements of the time, such as free-trade and the abolition of slavery. But when divested of these accessories, which do not essentially belong to it, co-operation appears to be an effort to get rid of the antagonism of capital and labour by embodying them both in the same people, and rendering the workman himself a capitalist. That is to say, it leaves the relations between capital and labour untouched; for the capitalist workman inevitably begins before long to employ labour, and the whole question arises again. This weakness in the effort, in the midst of all its great excellences, is seen clearly in the fact that the success of the movement has been largely restricted to distribution, that is to say, it has succeeded only when there has been no co-operation, in the proper sense of the word. It has succeeded admirably in supplying many poor men with good and honest articles, in keeping them from debt, in forcing on them a means of saving, and in accumulating in the hands of a large number of people very considerable capitals which would otherwise have been in the hands of a few. But when that point has been arrived at, the employment of these large capitals has presented an insuperable difficulty, unless they are to be used exactly like private capitals with all the evils of competition.

Although there had been certain earlier efforts in the same direction, practically the origin of the movement is to be found in the establishment, in 1844, of the Pioneer Society in Rochdale. ^{Success of the} Twenty-eight men, finding a capital of £1 each, began purchasing their own supplies, and dividing the profits in proportion to the amount of purchases. It is this principle which has been in nearly every case followed by co-operators. A fixed interest is paid on the capital advanced, and every purchaser buying at the ordinary market rates receives back, at the end of the year, a percentage on the amount of his purchases. The shares are usually £1 shares, and this percentage on the purchase is kept back till the £1 is paid, and then retained if the member so wishes it and added to

his capital invested in the concern. The member is thus compelled to save whether he wishes it or not up to a certain amount, and is induced to save afterwards. Repeated legislation for the benefit of the working classes, such as the Factory Acts, the Ten Hours Act, and the Acts of 1846 extending legal protection to Friendly Societies, allowed the rapid development of the principle. The return in December 1864 shows 500 registered Co-operative Societies in the towns and villages of England, with a share capital of £685,000, a business of £2,742,957, and a realised profit of £225,500. The average profit was large, and the Pioneers, after providing for interest on loans and shares, their education fund, and their reserve fund for charity and depreciation, were paying 2s. 4d. in the pound on members' purchases. In the same year a further step was taken by the establishment of the English Wholesale Society, which supplied the co-operative retail shops on co-operative principles. The success which had attended "stores" managed by the workmen themselves in their own interest was thus very great. Doubts as to general success of Co-operation.

The strength of the system had been thoroughly tested by the cotton distress, and it passed successfully through the trial. But when applied to the great problem, the relation of labour and capital, the system proved less successful. Unfortunately, the cotton famine had occurred just as the Rochdale Pioneers had set on foot a first-rate cotton mill; and although it was one of the last to leave off work and the first to resume it, its character was changed, and it was no longer owned by the workmen who worked in it. The system has since largely grown, is still being enthusiastically pushed, and is still producing excellent results. The accumulations of capital are very large in the hands of the different stores, but the method of its employment, and the means of extending the principle to production, are still undecided questions, dividing the opinions of the co-operators themselves.

In conjunction with these direct efforts to advance the interests of their class, many of the leaders of the working men were earnest supporters of the Temperance movement, which seemed to lead indirectly to the same result. Growth of the Temperance movement.

The evils arising from drunkenness are so obvious, and the amount of wages expended in liquor so vast, that for a good many years, especially since the preaching of Father Matthew, the attention of social reformers had been directed towards the mitigation of the evil. Many societies for the support of temperance, or of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks, had been established. In the Northern

States of America the movement had been more pronounced, and in 1851, by what is known as the Maine Liquor Law, the sale of alcoholic drinks had been entirely forbidden in the State of Maine. In 1852, encouraged by the success which, it was asserted, had attended this measure, certain gentlemen established a Committee, over which Mr. Walter Trevelyan presided, to carry on an agitation for the establishment of a similar measure in England. The result was a large organisation known as the Alliance. Under the guidance of this association a vigorous agitation was carried on, with all the apparatus of meetings, lectures, and the distribution of tracts. The principle urged was permissive prohibition, and after the adherence to the plan of a very important number of the ministers of religion in England, and, as far as could be ascertained, of a preponderance of other classes, in the year 1864 a Bill was brought into the House embodying this principle. It proposed to confer upon the ratepayers of cities, boroughs, parishes, and townships, the power to prohibit the common sale of drinks. A majority of two-thirds of the votes of the ratepayers would be necessary. This was the first introduction of that Permissive Bill which has since afforded so constant a subject of agitation. Attacking as it did very powerful interests, and placing in the hands of the ratepayers an extraordinary power over property already invested in a lucrative trade, it was as a matter of course rejected by the House. It secured however the support of forty members, and the Alliance, far from being disheartened, continued to pursue its objects vigorously. Like many other of the questions which about this time came to the front, the legislative enforcement of temperance is still unsettled. But its appearance adds one other proof to the growing importance of social questions consequent on the more democratic course on which England had entered. It may be classed among the efforts at self-improvement supported by the people themselves.

But it was not only to themselves that they might look for advance. The recognition of the claims of the poorer classes is visible alike in the legislation and in the private effort of the time. While laws were enacted to facilitate united action on the part of the workmen, protection afforded to women and children, and the hours of labour shortened, sanitary improvements culminating in the great work of London drainage were pressed forward. Philanthropists, at the head of whom Lord Shaftesbury stands in noble pre-eminence, were bringing to light the horrors of the gang system and employment of child labour for agricultural purposes in

the Eastern Counties, establishing ragged schools for the civilisation of the poorest part of children of cities, and drawing attention to the necessity of the improvement of workmen's houses. A rich American, Mr. Peabody, set a noble example in this direction by giving, in 1862, £150,000 for the benefit of the poor in London, a gift which he subsequently increased to £350,000, with which model dwellings for the poor were erected. In 1861 the Government had afforded an easy means of encouraging thrift, by the establishment of a savings-bank connected with the Post-Office. Its ramifications were thus spread into every corner of the kingdom, and the migratory habits of the working class conveniently met. The interest offered was not large, but the security, which, in the case of Friendly Societies, was often deficient, was of course perfect. At the suggestion of Lord Derby in 1864, it was made the condition in all Bills sanctioning metropolitan railways, that cheap trains to bring working men to their work should be run.

Another sign of the improvement which had taken place in the accepted standard of national requirements was the grant for the purpose of national education, which year by year increased, and the very considerable interest felt in the attempt made in 1862 to render it more effective.

The minute of the Committee of Privy Council, under which, since 1847, Government assistance to education had been given, had only proved partially successful. The status of the schoolmaster had been much raised, a good deal of help had been given him in the course of his professional training, and the standard of school-teaching improved. Yet when the result upon the pupils came to be examined, it was very disappointing. According to a report of a royal commission in the year 1861, whereas 2,200,000 children ought to have been brought into the inspected schools, no more than 920,000 actually attended them, and of these only 230,000 could be considered to have received adequate instruction in the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The system had called out much voluntary effort, had placed good teaching within reach of many of the poor, but had neither induced nor compelled them to take advantage of it. The grant was given to any school which satisfied the inspector as to its general efficiency. Various opinions might easily be held as to what constituted efficiency. The children were examined in classes; a few clever boys ready at answering covered the deficiencies of the rest of the class. Consequently the master was tempted to direct his attention to a few able and willing pupils, and, except as to discipline,

Efforts to
improve
education.

to neglect the rest. The method of dispensing the grant was also complicated. To cure these defects, Mr. Lowe, as Vice-President of the Committee of the Council on Education, produced what is known as the Revised Code. To secure simplicity, all the various forms of grant were to be reduced to one capitation fee. This was to be given for every child who had attended a fixed number of school times, and had satisfied the examiner. Each child was to be examined separately, in reading, writing, and arithmetic only, and the payment depended entirely upon the result. The partial teaching which had followed upon the old system was thus rendered unavailing for the purposes of the grant. At the same time, the higher subjects required by the old minute, having been for the most part very superficially taught, were swept away, and the grant was given for the thorough knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic only. When its objects are taken into consideration, the changes made by the Revised Code seem wise. The object of the national expenditure was to secure the wide spread of elementary knowledge; and the great principles of the code received pretty general approval. Against its details and methods, a very strong opposition was raised. The withdrawal of grants upon certificates, of assistance to pupil-teachers, and of extra payment to the master for instructing pupil-teachers, was looked upon as an attack on vested interests. That the grant should depend upon definite knowledge, irrespective of what was called general efficiency, was thought to leave out of sight many of the best parts of education. The system of grouping children by age was considered as highly inconvenient; it was thought that the responsibility of paying the pupil-teachers, now thrown upon the managers of the school, would prove too heavy a burden for them; and although the rules with regard to religious instruction had not been at all relaxed, fears were expressed that this was the beginning of secular education. Content to save the principle of the measure the Government gave way on most of these points. The grant was to be divided between knowledge and regularity, the grouping of the pupils was to be left to the managers. Any deficiency in the stipend of the teachers was to be made up by the Parliamentary grant; and a school belonging to the Church of England would lose its grant if religious instruction were neglected. With these modifications the Revised Code was accepted by Parliament.

The Revised
Code passed.
March 1862.

CHAPTER IX.

LORD RUSSELL'S MINISTRY, November 6, 1865.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Russell.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Cranworth.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Granville.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Duke of Argyll.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Gladstone.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir George Grey.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Mr. Cardwell.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Clarendon.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Lord Hartington.
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Earl de Grey and Ripon.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Duke of Somerset.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Milner Gibson.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Lord Stanley of Alderley.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Mr. Goschen.
<i>President of the Poor-Law Board</i>	Mr. Charles Villiers.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Wodehouse.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Brady.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Mr. Chichester Fortescue.

WHATEVER truth there may have been in Mr. Disraeli's views, they had failed in any way to influence the election of 1865. The result showed an increase of the Liberal majority, which was reckoned at seventy-seven. Perhaps of more importance to the Liberal party than its numerical increase, was the defeat of Mr. Gladstone at Oxford. Hitherto somewhat tied by the traditions of the party, and conscious that his opinions had outstripped those of the constituency which he represented, he had felt himself obliged to exercise a considerable self-restraint. His rejection by the University, and his election in Lancashire, left him more free to follow his own bent. As he himself told his new electors, he stood before them "unmuzzled." The death of Lord Palmerston, which placed the Premiership in the hands of Lord Russell, left the leadership of the Lower House to Mr. Gladstone, and the opportunity was thus given him of assuming that command-

Lord Russell's
Ministry.
Nov. 6, 1865.

ing position in the Liberal party which he has ever since occupied. The accession of Lord Russell to the Premiership necessitated some slight changes in the Administration. Lord Clarendon became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Chichester Fortescue succeeded Sir Robert Peel as Secretary for Ireland. Mr. Forster began his official life as Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and Mr. Goschen, who had been returned at the head of the four Liberal Members for the City of London, after holding for a short time the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Trade, was summoned to the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The Ministry seemed destined to a long life;—before eight months were over it had been driven to give place to the Conservative Opposition. Pledged as he believed to a measure of electoral reform, Lord Russell, with honest but impolitic haste, had forced the question to the front, had produced a Bill which excited the opposition of many sections of the House, and had fallen a victim to an adverse combination of Conservatives and Liberals. But his brief tenure of the Premiership had not been uneventful. The agricultural interest had suffered a severe blow by the prevalence of the cattle plague; a financial crisis had been warded off only by a relaxation of the restrictions on the Bank of England; a threatened outbreak of the blacks in Jamaica, and its cruel suppression, had excited much bitter feeling in England; and Irish discontent had reached a crisis demanding the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

The terrible murrain, known as the cattle disease or rinderpest, had appeared in London about the end of June. It rapidly spread through England, and even invaded Scotland. A Com- ^{The cattle} mission was appointed to take evidence upon it, and ^{plague.} recommended that very stringent measures should be taken, including the suppression of all transit of cattle, and the cessation of importation from abroad. The Government refused at first to accept the responsibility of carrying out the report, and thought it better, by means of Orders in Council to give large powers to local authorities, and to throw upon them the responsibility. It was no doubt a very serious thing suddenly to change the character of the meat-supply, and in fact to substitute dead-meat markets for cattle-markets in all the great centres of population. The remedies, as locally applied, proved insufficient. The terrible scourge continued its course, and when the Commissioners issued their second report, they stated that the total number of recorded cases (and the returns were avowedly imperfect) amounted to upwards of 120,000, of which 90,000 had proved fatal. Under these circumstances Government yielded, and in the

spring of 1866 the Home Secretary, Sir George Grey, introduced a Bill accepting most of the recommendations of the Commissioners, authorising the slaughter at the port of arrival of all foreign cattle, and allowing compensation to the owners for the loss sustained. With certain amendments, which rendered it still more stringent and lowered the compensation to be given, the Bill was passed. In spite of precautions the plague continued throughout the year, although gradually diminishing; but some compensating advantages attended the heavy losses which it entailed. The sanitary condition of farms, and of the establishments of milkmen, began to attract increased attention. The abuses of live cattle-markets in cities, and especially in London, were lessened or removed by the introduction of dead-meat markets. And as the sheds of the cow-keepers in or near London had proved to be centres of the disease, a whole new branch of trade, which has since been very largely developed, was opened to the agriculturists in the milk-supply of large towns.

The commercial difficulties of the country were not to be traced to any diminution in the amount of trade, but to the success which had attended the late financial measures, coupled with a largely increased employment of the principle of limited liability. Nearly 250 limited companies, either wholly new or formed from private concerns already existing, had been established during the year. It was the failure of the largest of these companies, the firm of Messrs. Overend and Gurney, the bill discounters, which brought on the crisis. The apprehension and distress in the city is described as extraordinary. The rate of discount had already reached nine per cent., but on the 11th of May the Governor of the Bank informed the Chancellor of the Exchequer that in the course of one day upwards of four millions had been advanced to bankers and bill-brokers, and the reserve diminished one-half, a sum scarcely exceeding £3,000,000. The Ministry thought it prudent to avert the impending ruin by allowing an issue of notes, beyond the limits fixed by law, at ten per cent. discount. Again had it been found impossible to resist the pressure of the mercantile world, and to uphold in the time of difficulty the requirements of the Bank Act. The relaxation produced the effect desired; confidence was gradually restored. Though many failures marked the course of the year, and gave proof of the insecure extreme to which speculative trading had been pressed, the commerce of the country was in the main sound, and the difficulty passed away.

More important in some respects, because more directly dependent

upon the action of England as an Imperial Power, than the visitation of disease or the fluctuations of trade, were the events occurring in Jamaica and in Ireland. Very different in importance as the temporary disturbance in Jamaica and the increasing discontent in Ireland were, they are not without some curious points of resemblance. Though comparatively trivial, the outbreak in Jamaica and its suppression throw a not altogether pleasant light upon English methods, when applied to the government of a subject race. There was displayed on a small theatre the same arrogant sense of superiority, the same bigoted trust in the divine right of the landowner, the same unrestrained eagerness in revenge for the death of an Englishman, which has characterised unfortunately English rule wherever it has been planted. The disturbances were confined to the district and parish of St. Thomas in the East. There were local grievances arising from a dispute between Mr. Gordon, a native proprietor, and Baron Ketelholdt, the custos of the parish. Mr. Gordon, a dissenter, and apparently a reformer of abuses and unpopular among his fellows, had been deprived of his place among the magistrates, and prevented from filling the office of churchwarden to which he was elected. The expenses of the suits against him had been defrayed from the public purse. The native Baptists, the sect to which he belonged, were angry with what they regarded as at once an act of persecution and a misappropriation of the public money. Indignation meetings had been held, at which Mr. Gordon had used language of an inflammatory character, but couched in general terms, and with denunciations so veiled in Scriptural expressions that they could scarcely be regarded as implying any wish on his part to proceed to extremities. They had however fallen on ignorant and willing ears. For behind this quarrel, which would not of itself have produced much result, there lay more general grievances. There was a widespread though probably ungrounded feeling that wages were unduly low. The native labourer was no doubt an idler, and the smallness of his receipts was due to the inefficiency of his labour. But there was a real grievance in the difficulty of obtaining redress through law administered entirely by landlords; and as a natural consequence there had grown up a strong mistrust of the law itself, and a complete alienation between the employer and the employed. To this was added a feeling on the part of the class above the ordinary labourer, known as the free settlers, that they were unduly rented, and obliged to pay rent for land which they should have held free; and there was a very general though vague expectation that in some

The Jamaica
insurrection.

Causes for the
outbreak.

way or other the occupiers would be freed from the payment of rent. The insurrection broke out in October. A quarrel arose during the sitting of the Petty Sessions at Morant Bay, and a policeman had been beaten. Warrants were issued for the apprehension of Paul Bogle and some others of the alleged rioters, who lived at a place called Stoney Gut, some five miles distant. The attempt to serve the warrant produced a formidable rescue. Some four hundred men, armed with cutlasses and sticks, rushed from a chapel where Bogle was in the habit of preaching, beat off the policemen, and took some of them prisoners. On the next day, when the Magistrates and Vestry were assembled in the Court-House at Morant Bay, a crowd of insurgents made their appearance, the volunteers were called out, and the Riot Act read; and after a skirmish the Court-House was taken and burnt, eighteen of the defenders killed and thirty wounded. The jail was broken open and several stores sacked. There was some evidence that the rising was premeditated, and that a good deal of drilling had been going on among the blacks under the command of Bogle. From Morant Bay armed parties of the insurgents passed inland through the country attacking the plantations, driving the inhabitants to take refuge in the bush, and putting some of the whites to death. The Governor of the Island at the time was Mr. Eyre. He at once summoned his Privy Council, and with their advice declared martial law over the county of Surrey, with the exception of the town of Kingston. Bodies of troops were also at once despatched to surround the insurgent district, and in the opinion of the Commissioners intrusted to examine into the case afterwards

Its cruel suppression. the military operations were well arranged, and well carried out. But if in a military point of view successful, they were attended with excessive acts of severity which can scarcely be excused. 439 persons fell victims to summary punishment, and not less than a thousand dwellings were burnt; besides which, it would appear that at least 600 men and women were subjected to flogging, in some instances with circumstances of unusual cruelty. But the event which chiefly fixed the attention of the public in England was the summary conviction and execution of Mr. Gordon. He was undoubtedly a troublesome person, and there were circumstances raising a suspicion that he possessed a guilty knowledge of the intended insurrection. They were however far too slight to have secured his conviction before a Court of Law. But Governor Eyre caused him to be arrested in Kingston, where martial law did not exist, hurried on board ship and carried to Morant Bay, within the

proclaimed district. He was there tried by a court-martial, consisting of three young officers. Their sentence was sanctioned by Brigadier Nelson, the officer in command, and he was immediately executed. Although the abuses of power which had attended the suppression of the insurrection did not escape notice, there was at first a general feeling of approbation of the energetic and successful action of the Governor. A formal expression of this feeling was even made in Parliament. But as by degrees fresh proofs of uncalculated severity were brought to light, the opinion of the Liberal party changed, and the country rang with vehement denunciations of the Governor and his agents. It was found necessary to appoint Commissioners to inquire into the circumstances. Their report, a temperate statement of facts, brought out the really dangerous character of the movement, praised the promptitude and vigour of Governor Eyre, but concluded by stating that, in the opinion of the Commissioners, martial law had been continued for an unnecessary length of time, that the punishments were excessive, the executions unnecessarily frequent, the floggings reckless and sometimes positively barbarous, and the burning of houses wanton and cruel. With regard to Mr. Gordon, they declared the evidence of his guilt to be insufficient, and expressed a belief that though his language had been culpably violent he had not intended to proceed to the length of rebellion. Upon this report it was thought well, by those who disapproved of what had been done, to institute proceedings against Governor Eyre himself, and some of those who had acted under his orders. The legal proceedings lingered on for several years. Again and again the Grand Jury refused to bring a true bill against Mr. Eyre, and although on one occasion the charge of Chief-Justice Cockburn was full of severe strictures upon the undue employment of martial law, the jury even then concluded that the Governor had done only what he honestly thought was necessary for the preservation of the Colony. Eventually, in 1872, after a Parliamentary discussion, Government paid Mr. Eyre's legal expenses, and thus publicly exonerated him from blame. Public feeling in England was considerably divided on the question, but as usual the general opinion of the upper classes was in favour of the assertion of authority, and ready to condone much cruelty and illegality, if only it conduced to the maintenance of English supremacy.

Early in the session of 1866, and during its continuance, Irish affairs had been the topic of considerable debates in the House of Commons. The continued poverty of Ireland, and the ceaseless

stream of emigrants leaving its shores for America, had been pointed out, and the usual difference of opinion as to possible cures had shown itself. Absenteeism, the paucity of leases, the want of some tenant right or law to ensure compensation for tenants' improvements, the unthrifty character of the tenants, the unsatisfactory position of the Protestant Church, and the peculiarities of the climate, had all in turn been emphasised as the causes of the admitted evil. But no consensus in favour of any of the various cures suggested had been arrived at sufficient to allow of the introduction of a remedial measure. The view of the Government indeed, as expressed by both the Secretary of Ireland and by the Premier, had been one of hope. The harvest was declared to be satisfactory, and trade and manufacture extending over the country. But any appearance of returning content was, in fact, delusive. The ill success of the open movement of Young Ireland, and the measure of repression with which it had been attended, had had the effect of turning into secret channels the feeling of opposition to England which still existed in all its strength. The secret society known as the Phœnix had been discovered and suppressed, only to be succeeded by the far more formidable organisation known as the Fenian Brotherhood. Arranged with more than usual skill as a secret association, it differed from former Irish organisations of the same kind in this, that its strength lay not in the country itself, but in the Irish who had made America their home, and that its object was overt military rebellion. The flood of emigration from Ireland to the States had never ceased. The Irishman had carried with him all his old rancour against England. He had found himself with his fellow-countrymen able to play an important part in the party politics of his new country. Filled with a new sense of importance, he formed the hope of employing his influence to force hostility to England upon the American Government, and believed that in the irritation which had arisen between the countries from the circumstances of the great civil war he had found his opportunity of so doing. In that war the Irish had taken a large part. They were found indiscriminately in both armies. The lessons of the war had not been lost upon them. To their old national characteristics, the Irish-Americans had added the power of combination and discipline, and the somewhat reckless enterprise of the partisan soldier. Although, as will be subsequently seen, the movement was futile, and even attracted ridicule by its want of success, it was by no means a thing to be laughed at. When the heated partisanship

Rise of the
Fenian move-
ment.

Danger arising
from its Ameri-
can connection.

which attends American politics is remembered, it will be evident that one of the contending parties might easily have been induced to secure the votes of the Irish by co-operation in their plans. The as yet undecided question of the *Alabama* claims might easily have given popularity to such a course of action, and the open frontier of Canada afforded an easy scene of operations. The danger was however much diminished when the want of fidelity, which so constantly destroys secret societies, began to show itself. The Government received very full information of the designs of the Brotherhood, and was prepared to meet them. A sudden raid on the 15th of September was made upon the office of *The Irish People*, which was the organ of the Brotherhood. O'Donovan Rossa, the proprietor, and several others in connection with the paper, were apprehended, and the whole contents of the office carried off by the authorities. At the same time, in Cork, with similar rapidity of action, some twenty men were arrested, and shortly afterwards the house, in which James Stephens "the Head Centre" in Ireland lived, was searched by the police, and Stephens with Kickham and certain other important members of the conspiracy arrested. In November a Special Commission was opened in Dublin and in Cork to try the prisoners, and abundant evidence was found to convict the larger part of them, and to lay open the full designs of the organisation. It became evident that the movement was not only directed towards the independence of Ireland, but to the entire overthrow of the existing state of society, and the general division of property. There was no hesitation on the part of the juries to find verdicts. The prisoners were condemned to various terms of penal servitude. The only failure on the part of the Government was caused by the escape of Stephens, who, aided by partisans among the prison officials, contrived to break out of Richmond jail, and to elude all efforts at recapture. He does not appear to have been a man of very firm character. At all events, the lesson he had received prevented him from ever afterwards assuming a prominent position among the Fenians. But these first apprehensions seemed by no means to put an end to the danger. More arrests were made, while the large ramifications of the Society became more and more obvious. Under these circumstances Lord Wodehouse, the Lord-Lieutenant, informed the Government in London, that the Chancellor, and Mr. Fortescue, the Secretary, entirely agreed with him on the necessity of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, and that immediately. The agents of the Society were scattered over the country swearing in members, and

Arrest of the
leaders.

VICT.

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ready to take the command. Of these American-Irishmen, thoroughly reckless men, possessed of considerable military experience, about 500 were known to the police. There were also some hundreds of men brought over from England and Scotland, and receiving 1s. 6d. a day, waiting for the time of action. Manufactories of pikes, bullets, and cartridges had been discovered, and, the worst feature of all, attempts were being made to seduce the troops. The letter containing this information was laid before the House of Commons on Friday the 16th of February, with an intimation that the Government proposed to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, and to make arrangements for carrying it at once through all its stages, so that it might be in the hands of the Irish Government on the morning of Monday the 19th. Very little opposition was encountered. Both Mr. Bright and Mr. Mill expressed their feeling of shame that the maladministration of England should have rendered such a measure necessary, but declined to oppose it. Only six votes were given against the introduction of the Bill, and it was passed without further discussion. With the same rapidity it was hurried through the Upper House. The document, appointing Commissioners to give the royal assent, was already in the hands of Lord Granville with the Queen at Osborne. Notice was telegraphed to him that the Bill had passed, and he at once obtained the Queen's signature. The House of Lords was kept sitting to give time for the messenger to bring the paper to London, and early on the Sunday morning the Commissioners duly made their appearance, and the Bill became law. The effect of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus was considerable and immediate. Large numbers of the Irish-Americans at once took flight. Yet the conspiracy had gone too far to be entirely checked. It even assumed the dangerous form of an invasion of the Canadian frontier. At the end of May some 1200 men crossed the Niagara river, and were with some difficulty checked by the loyal volunteers. The attempt, though at first it appeared fraught with danger, brought to light the delusive character of any hope which the Fenians might have formed of enlisting the Americans on their side. The United States Government refused to allow hostile operations against a friendly Power to be carried on along its frontier, and took vigorous measures to suppress the outbreak. Although it was thus proved that the movement was wanting in that support which could alone make it really dangerous, the reckless men who directed it continued their operations in Ireland itself, and it fell to the lot of Lord Russell's successors to continue the suspension of the

Suspension of
the Habeas
Corpus Act.

Habeas Corpus Act, and to deal with more than one important difficulty of Fenian origin.

It was the question of Reform which threw the further conduct of Irish affairs into new hands. Since the failure of Lord Russell's Bill in 1860, the question, as far as the Government was concerned, had been allowed to rest. Lord Palmerston himself regarded with disfavour any extension of the franchise. His popularity, and the quiet satisfaction with which his long tenure of office was attended, had prevented any active efforts to bring the question to the front. His death broke the charmed quiet. Lord Russell felt himself pledged to immediate movement, and the restless activity of Mr. Gladstone was certain to bring that statesman to his support. Accordingly it was indicated in the Queen's Speech that reform of the electoral franchise was in contemplation, and on the 12th of March the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced the measure. No less than six times, he said, the speech from the Throne had recommended a revision of the representation, and the time had now arrived for carrying it out. He explained, however, that a complete revision was a work immense in itself, and attended with great difficulties. At the time of the great Reform Bill two years had been practically sacrificed for the purpose of passing it. He proposed therefore, leaving all side questions to further consideration, to proceed at present with that part only of the scheme which consisted in the lowering and arrangement of the franchise. The propositions were simple in character. It was intended to reduce the county franchise to £14, which it was estimated would add about 171,000 persons to the electoral lists. As a reward for thrift £50 deposited in the savings-bank for two years untouched was to give the right of voting; some 15,000 electors would thus be added. In towns (the most important, perhaps, of the points to be arranged) the franchise was to be lowered from £10 to £7. What were known as the compound householders (men hiring houses, the rates of which were paid by the landlord), occupiers of parts of houses, and lodgers, were all to be admitted to the franchise if the value of their holding was a clear £7 a year, not as before estimated on the rates but upon the rental. Rather more than 200,000 would thus be added to the borough constituencies, making a total increase of some 400,000 new voters.

It is rather strange that a Bill of such very moderate dimensions should have occasioned the fall of the Ministry. But, in fact, it was its very moderation which was the cause of its weakness. It failed to

Lord Russell's
Reform Bill.

excite that popular enthusiasm which was required to compel the Liberal party to accept it heartily, and to act in unison. It had all the appearance of a compromise. It seemed as though its framers had attempted to satisfy that portion of their supporters which desired a lower franchise, without shocking the strong party of Palmerstonian Liberals, on whom their majority largely depended. The successful passage of the Bill would moreover have implied an immediate dissolution, a step which a newly elected Parliament could hardly be expected to approve of. A somewhat strange result followed. The so-called Liberals of a Conservative turn of mind, feeling no pressure from without, regarded themselves as free to act according to their pleasure, and certain of them headed by Mr. Lowe and Mr. Horsman attacked the Bill with violence, declaring, as was indeed somewhat true, that it rested on no great principle, was merely a new step towards throwing all power into the hands of mere numbers, a course which must inevitably lead, if pursued, to a completely democratic suffrage. The impassioned eloquence of Mr. Gladstone, and the nervous oratory of Mr. Bright, were alike in vain. In vain too was the ridicule which he threw upon Mr. Horsman as the chief of a new party who had retired into his political cave of Adullam, and called about him every one who was in distress and every one who was discontented. The "Adullamites" proved sufficiently strong, when joined to the Conservatives, to allow the passing of the second reading of the Bill by the narrow majority of five only. Mr. Gladstone had staked the continuance of the Government upon the success of his measure. He had passed the Rubicon, he said, and broken down the bridge, and burnt his boats. Small though the majority was, he determined to continue in office while the Bill passed into Committee. But, as was certain under the circumstances, it there encountered a fire of amendments of all sorts; and at length Lord Dunkellin, a Liberal, succeeded in carrying against the Ministry an amendment substituting rating for rental. The change would have been very trifling, but as much stress had been laid upon the superiority of a rental to a rating franchise the Government could not refuse to consider it as a vital matter, and at once resigned.

General
opposition to
the Bill.

Resignation of
the Ministry.
June 26, 1866.

CHAPTER X.

LORD DERBY'S MINISTRY, June 1866.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Derby.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Chelmsford.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Duke of Buckingham.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Malmesbury.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Disraeli.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Spencer Walpole.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Carnarvon.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Stanley.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	General Peel.
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Lord Cranborne.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Sir John Pakington.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Sir Stafford Northcote.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Duke of Montrose.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Lord Devon.
<i>President of the Poor-Law Board,</i>	Mr. Gathorne Hardy.
<i>Chief Commissioner of Works,</i>	Lord John Manners.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Abercorn.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Blackburne.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Lord Naas (Earl of Mayo).

The following changes took place in March 1867 :—

<i>President of the Council,</i>	Duke of Marlborough.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Duke of Buckingham.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Sir John Pakington.
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Sir Stafford Northcote.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Mr. Corry.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Duke of Richmond.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Colonel Patten, May 1867.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Gathorne Hardy, May 1867.
<i>In the Cabinet, without office,</i>	Mr. Spencer Walpole, May 1867.

The following changes took place in February 1868 :—

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Mr. Disraeli.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Ward Hunt.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Cairns.

THE defeat of the late Ministry had been caused by a union of the Conservatives with a section of the Liberal party. The Conservatives were in a minority in the House, and the "Adullamite party" refused to join in the new arrangements. Thus, though Lord Derby found no difficulty in

Lord Derby's
Ministry.
June 1866.

forming a satisfactory Ministry, with Mr. Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the Lower House, it remained to be seen how government could be carried on in the face of a hostile majority.

It was not till the 9th of July that any declaration of the principles of the Ministers could be made. It was therefore impossible that in the few remaining weeks of the session any legislation of importance should be undertaken. But short as the period was, it afforded opportunity for an exhibition of popular feeling, which was not without its effect upon the future conduct of the Ministry. Although the enthusiasm of the constituencies in favour of reform had not been sufficient to compel a firm cohesion among the Liberal members, the defeat of the Government measure, and the fear lest the object so nearly obtained should be snatched from them, had excited much angry feeling among the Radicals and the working class. It seemed to be taken for granted that the new Ministry, even should it try to handle the question at all, would treat the reform of the electorate in a Conservative spirit. Leagues and associations for the purpose of furthering the popular wish were created, the most important of which was the Reform League. It was determined to hold a monster demonstration in Hyde Park, under the presidency of Mr. Beales, the head of the League. Mr. Walpole, the Home Secretary, determined to prevent the intended meeting. The people were forbidden to assemble in the Park, the gates were closed, and a large body of police placed on duty. Processions headed by bands moved towards the Marble Arch. Mr. Beales and his friends demanded admittance, which was refused on the authority of the police. The leaders withdrew to Trafalgar Square, and there held an orderly meeting. But expectation of disturbance had collected a large crowd round the Park, among which were naturally many disorderly persons. The sympathy of the crowd was entirely with the demonstrators, and there was a strong feeling that the exclusion of the people from the Park was a strained use of authority. While the leaders therefore quietly withdrew, the mob broke into disorder, threw down the railings of the Park, and rushed tumultuously into the inclosure. It was thought necessary to bring soldiers upon the scene, but they were not employed. Indeed, though the excitement was great, and many of the inhabitants of London fancied that the reign of anarchy had begun, there was little serious rioting. But the disturbance was enough to show the danger which might easily arise from any refusal to handle

Reform demonstrations and processions.

the matter of reform, or from any overstrained use of authority in opposing what the people regarded as their rights.

The agitation thus begun was continued during the year. Meetings, and demonstrations, and long-drawn processions, in which the Trades Unions took a marked part, were of constant recurrence. The effect produced on the mind of Mr. Disraeli, who was employed during the recess in preparing his reform scheme, was very visible when his plan saw the light. Very early in the session of 1867, having caused those passages of the Queen's Speech to be read which had reference to reform, and which urged that it should be undertaken in a spirit of moderation, he proceeded to explain what the meaning of the passages was. Conscious of the necessity of settling a question which had caused the overthrow of more than one Ministry, and was constantly interfering with the course of business, the Government intended to lift it if possible above the level of party discussion, and to call upon all parties of the House to join in settling it. For that purpose it was proposed that a series of resolutions should be introduced and passed, and a Bill founded upon them. It is easy to attack Mr. Disraeli for adopting this form of procedure, to point out that Government was in fact shirking its responsibilities, and refusing to stake its existence upon a Bill of primary importance on which it was very probable that it would be defeated. And such were the charges heaped upon him at the time. His action was regarded as that of merely a skilful party leader. Beginning his Parliamentary career without any of the advantages which birth or connection give, Mr. Disraeli had undoubtedly fought his way to the front by attachment to party, and by a somewhat unscrupulous use of great talents and of an unusually sharp and bitter tongue. But it may well be doubted whether his views were not upon the whole broader and more statesmanlike than those of any other Parliamentary leader of the time. He had a clear conception of the Constitution of England, which he regarded as depending upon the co-ordinate power of various classes and the absence of the predominance of any one class. He was full of dislike, a dislike which he had expressed even in his youngest days, for the Whig party, whose liberal professions he regarded as hollow and resting on self-interested motives; nor did he feel stronger attachment for the Manchester Radicals, whose aspirations appeared to be limited to the middle class. The Reform Bill of 1832 had in his eyes the great flaw that it had disfranchised by many of its provisions the labouring class, while the attempts to improve upon that measure had all been

Disraeli's views on Reform.

in one direction, tending merely by a lowered franchise to enforce the principle that the will of the numerical majority should be the true source of power, and leading as he believed to the overthrow of the balance of the Constitution. It was with the hope of redressing the grievance of the lower classes which he acknowledged, but of restraining the domination of numbers which he abhorred, that he now attempted to settle upon broad grounds the great question at issue. As he himself subsequently stated, he had passed the last few years in educating his party, or, as he explained in a letter, "his party had been educated by events." But it was not to be expected that the process should have been absolutely successful, or that all those who habitually regarded the lowering of the franchise as an evil, or a step towards democracy, should be able to distinguish any vital difference between the elaborate method in which the extension was now to be carried out, and the simpler and more direct plan upheld by the Radical party. However, he succeeded apparently in persuading the Cabinet to allow him to produce the resolutions, on which, if carried, the Government Bill was to be founded. They contained the propositions that the number of electors in counties and boroughs should be increased; that this should be effected by reducing the qualification both in counties and boroughs, and adding other franchises; that while more direct representation of the labouring classes was wanted, the pre-dominating power of any one class or interest was contrary to the Constitution; that the occupation franchise should be based on rating; that the principle of plurality of votes was desirable; that the distribution of seats should be revised without the complete disfranchisement of any borough; that provision should be made to prevent bribery and corruption; and that the use of polling papers should be allowed.

These resolutions were brought in on the 11th of February. On the 25th Mr. Disraeli proceeded to explain them, and to indicate the use to which he intended to put them. A £6 rating franchise in the boroughs, a £20 rating franchise in the counties, and four fancy franchises—based on education, on the possession of £50 in the public funds, or £30 in the savings-bank, and the payment of 20s. direct taxes,—producing, it was calculated, an addition of 400,000 new voters, were the essential parts of his proposition. It was very coldly received. Procedure by resolution was objected to; the figures were questioned; the fancy franchises laughed at. It became so evident that strong and probably success-

Resolutions on
Reform brought
in. Feb. 11,
1867.

Disraeli's
explanation of
the measure.
Feb. 25.

ful opposition would be encountered that on the following day the Government yielded, and promised to bring in a complete Bill on the 18th of March. Before that day arrived the Cabinet was for a while broken up. The probability of dissensions among the Ministers had been foreseen; and the public were not much surprised when they heard upon the 4th that Lord Cranborne, Lord Carnarvon, and General Peel, had resigned. Their places were speedily filled. Sir Stafford Northcote became Secretary of State for India, the Duke of Buckingham Colonial Minister; Sir John Pakington was transferred from the Admiralty to the War Department, and Mr. Corry took his place as First Lord of the Admiralty. The story of ministerial difficulty was explained, and a good deal of ridicule thrown upon the Government, by the speech of Sir John Pakington at Droitwich when seeking re-election. At the same time the reason of the weakness and unsatisfactory character of the measures indicated on the 25th of February was brought to light. From the first, a certain number of the Cabinet had shrunk from the step to which Mr. Disraeli was leading them. General Peel had openly declared his disapproval. Their objections had been for a while silenced, and Sir John Pakington at all events believed on leaving the Cabinet on Saturday the 23d of February that there was a unanimous opinion with regard to the Bill which was to be explained on the following Monday. But suddenly, at about half-past one on the Monday, the Cabinet was hastily got together, and informed that General Peel, Lord Cranborne, and Lord Carnarvon, had withdrawn their adhesion to the determination which had been arrived at; it would appear that during the Sunday a close examination of the figures had proved that in some boroughs household suffrage would have resulted. What was the Government to do? In less than half an hour the Prime Minister was pledged to address his party; at half-past four the statement in the House of Commons was to be made. Disraeli was ready for the emergency. Uncertain apparently from the first of the success of his educational process, and determined at all hazards to have the credit of settling the question, he had drawn up an alternative measure to be produced "in the event of the rejection of the large and liberal scheme of the Ministry." That smaller plan being ready at hand was the one explained by him on the 25th of February. Its cold reception had proved to him that its success was more than doubtful, and he therefore determined to risk the disapprobation of his colleagues and to fall back upon his first and wider plan. The knowledge of this determination produced its natural results, the dissentients in the Cabinet

resigned; and when the appointed day arrived it was the original and larger measure which was produced.

As explained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 18th of March the object of the Bill was to strengthen the functions of the House, and to establish them on a broad and popular basis. It had no tendency, he said, towards democracy. A residence of two years, and the personal payment of rates, were to be the conditions of the borough franchise; 237,000 voters would thus be at once added to the borough constituencies. Upwards of 480,000 householders who did not pay their own rates would be left unenfranchised, but, as every facility would be given them to take their direct share in the public burdens, it was to be supposed that a very considerable number of these would also be added to the list of voters. The same four additional franchises as had been before mentioned were to be given, which it was expected would add more than 320,000 voters; and it was estimated that on the whole, what with householders and those possessing a vote under these fancy franchises, as they were called, the addition to the borough constituencies would amount to more than a million. Plurality of votes, that is to say, the right of any one possessing a vote under the fancy franchise as well as under the borough or county occupation franchise to register two votes, formed a part of the Bill. It was intended that the fancy franchises should serve as a counterpoise to the occupation franchises, and increase the number of voters without changing the balance of power. The Bill was of course at once assaulted as being intricate and confused. Mr. Gladstone (and Mr. Bright agreed with him) declared that there was a difference amongst householders, and that the true way of arriving at a principle on which to fix the lower limit of the franchise was to take a sum, £5, as the value of a house on which rate should be paid, both the liability to the payment of rates and the possession of the franchise ceasing at that point. The partisans of the Bill on the other hand urged that residence and rating, that is, the personal bearing of a portion of the public burdens, formed the real and constitutional limit. In opposition to this view, it was urged that as the assessment of the rates was in the hands of the vestries the right to vote would practically be controlled by the middle classes. On the second reading (March 25) Mr. Gladstone, stating the general agreement that the question should be settled in the course of the year, summed up the alterations which would be required to make the Bill acceptable. He demanded a

The Reform
Bill brought in.
March 18.

Gladstone's
amendments
carried in Com-
mittee.

lodger franchise; some means of preventing the traffic in votes of the lowest class of householders; the abolition of all distinction between the personal ratepayer and the compound ratepayer, of the tax-paying franchise, and of the double vote; the county franchise, he said, must be reduced, and the use of voting papers must be given up. The second of these demands meant the adoption of his favourite plan of limiting both rating and the franchise at £5. But with the exception of this, the list of requirements included the rejection of all those safeguards with which Mr. Disraeli had thought to hedge round the extended franchise. The confession of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there were many things in the Bill which he did not regard as of vital importance led to the belief that he would yield everything upon the application of sufficient pressure, and encouraged the Opposition in their determination to alter the Bill very completely in Committee. Their first movement encountered a somewhat unexpected check. At a meeting of the Liberal party it had been arranged that Mr. Coleridge should introduce an amendment to give effect to Mr. Gladstone's favourite change as to rating. But to many of the stronger Liberals this somewhat arbitrary marking off of what Mr. Bright had spoken of as the residuum did not commend itself. A meeting held in the tea-room of the House of Commons determined that the amendment should not be supported. This split among the Liberals was fatal to Mr. Coleridge's amendment. But one by one Mr. Disraeli's securities disappeared. The principle of double voting was thrown over by the Government; the two years' residence as a qualification for the borough vote was reduced by an amendment to one year; the education and tax-paying franchises were after a little resistance struck out; a lodger franchise was introduced; and the discussion at last centred upon the sole remaining condition—the personal payment of rates—which stood between the proposition of the Bill and a simple household franchise. Over "the compound householder," as he was called, there was an apparently endless dispute. It was plain to one party that he practically paid his rates through his landlord, and that to insist upon his paying them again in order to obtain his vote was an injustice. But, on the other hand, personal payment of rates was regarded as the very principle of the Bill. The difficulty was solved by an unexpected amendment moved by Mr. Hodgkinson that the compound householder should be altogether destroyed, and that in Parliamentary boroughs composition should wholly disappear. The other parts of the Bill were handled nearly as roughly. The county

franchise was lowered to £12; the minimum population allowing of two members was raised from 7000 to 10,000. The suggestion of the use of voting papers was dropped; three members were given to four large towns; and by a subsequent amendment in the House of Lords, an arrangement for the protection of minorities was introduced, by which in towns having three members each elector was restricted to voting for two of them.

The Reform Bill completed. Aug. 15, 1867.

When the Bill was finally passed the state of the franchise was this: in boroughs all male householders rated to the poor-rate, all lodgers resident for one year and paying £10 of rent, possessed the vote, and in counties all persons owning property of £5 annual value, or occupiers paying £12 a year. In their determination to pass some Bill, the Conservatives had thus reduced the franchise in boroughs to the simple household franchise which had so long been their bugbear, and had taken a step towards democracy longer than their opponents had ever ventured to suggest, and more complete than even Mr. Bright or Mr. Gladstone would have desired. Though Lord Cranborne and Lord Derby himself spoke of the measure as a leap in the dark, and Mr. Lowe grumbled at the necessity it involved of educating the new masters of the country, the simplicity of the Bill as carried, and the definite character of the principle on which it rested, had at least the advantage of setting the question at rest for a considerable number of years. It cannot be denied however that it gave a very decisive proof of the direction in which the public mind was moving, and that it forms a real epoch in the constitutional development of the country. Whether for good or evil England had become a democracy. Nothing was wanting to the completion of the process of change but the equalisation of the county and borough franchises, and the rearrangement of the constituencies which naturally attended that measure.

Though the Reform Bill was undoubtedly the chief work of the Ministry, there were other matters, mostly handed on to them by their predecessors in the Government, requiring their serious attention.

They had indeed accepted office at a time of considerable gloom and difficulty. A commercial crisis, so severe that it had necessitated a tampering with the Bank Act, was not yet over; the year 1866 was marked throughout by many disastrous failures, although general trade and credit were not seriously injured; the cloud of Fenian insurrection still hung over Ireland, and compelled the continuation of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus; the cattle plague, though gradually yielding to the stringent

measures taken against it, was raging in many parts of England; the cholera was beginning to show itself; and abroad, the great war in which the leadership of the German nation was being decided called for the most careful conduct on the part of our Foreign Office. In respect of none of these questions was it possible for the Government to pursue a line of conduct which differed much from that of the late administration. With regard to foreign policy it is indeed to be observed that though the method in which it is conducted affords constant ground for party attack, the main objects sought by successive Governments have nearly always been the same; and not unfrequently a newly appointed Ministry has practically confessed that it could do nothing better than pursue the lines which as an Opposition it had found it convenient to attack. In the present case, though not without a jeering allusion to the meddlesome and ineffectual advice which Lord Russell had offered to foreign Courts, the Premier practically owned that non-intervention was as much the principle of a Tory as of a Liberal administration, and that in the fight of giants which was going on in Germany the best course for England was to stand aloof.

Bismarck, who had long been preparing to assume for Prussia the leadership of the German nation, had seen in the Sleswig-Holstein disputes an opportunity at length afforded for carrying out his views. He seized upon it with remarkable skill; few pieces of diplomacy have been so successful. It would be assuming too much perhaps to assert that Bismarck saw clearly from the first the line which he subsequently pursued, or that he pursued it throughout with the unscrupulous intention of producing a war with Austria. It is certain however that his main objects were the creation of a United Germany under the leadership of Prussia, and as a necessary step the destruction of the existing Federal Constitution and the exclusion (in all probability not without war) of Austria from the commanding position that country at present occupied. Every event as it occurred was turned with consummate ability towards the attainment of these ends. From the first Bismarck had refused to regard the Sleswig-Holstein question as one of Federal interest. It was as an international quarrel that he had treated it, and as such he had induced Austria to join in it. The close of the war by the Treaty of Vienna (Oct. 30, 1864) confirmed this view, and left Austria and Prussia the joint possessors of the conquered Duchies. The Convention of Gastein (Aug. 14, 1865), by which the joint occupation came to an end—Sleswig being

Success of Bismarck's German policy.

Other important interests.

placed wholly in Prussian, Holstein wholly in Austrian hands,—was conceived in the same spirit. In both the Treaties Austria had been persuaded to take the false step of separating itself from the Federal action of the Diet. When almost immediately it began to resume its connection with the Federation, and to support the claims of the Duke of Augustenburg to the combined Duchies in pursuance of the policy of the Diet, Bismarck was at once able to complain of an infraction of the Gastein Convention. No secret had been made of the intention of Prussia to treat the Duchies as conquered Provinces, and to admit the Duke of Augustenburg only upon conditions suiting the Prussian views; in his refusal to accept those conditions the Duke was supported by the Diet and by Austria. In his quarrel with Austria Bismarck did not intend to stand alone. The dispute between the two great German Powers was watched with anxiety by the Italians. It appeared probable that an opportunity would occur for completing the unity for which they longed by the conquest of Venetia. It was their obvious policy to attach themselves to Prussia; and an alliance was contracted between them (April 8, 1866). Meanwhile both sides were arming and moving troops towards the frontier. Efforts were as usual made to prevent the threatened war, and an arrangement was arrived at for mutual disarmament. But, although Austria began to withdraw her troops from the Prussian frontier, while Italy threatened her on the south it was impossible for her to disarm. Bismarck had contrived to put her in the wrong, and to throw upon her Government the burden of refusing to put her troops upon a peace footing. A second effort at peacemaking led to a like result; France, England, and Russia attempted to bring the disputants to a Conference. Again Austria appeared as the objecting Power. In accepting the Conference Austria made it a condition that no territorial changes should be considered. It was indeed impossible for the Imperial Government to surrender without compensation either what it had won in the Sleswig-Holstein war, or the remnants of the Italian dominion, yet it was well known that such cessions would be required at the Conference. International intervention having thus failed, Austria attempted to treat the question as one of Federal interest, and had recourse to the Diet. No step could have been more entirely favourable to the objects of Bismarck. The majority of the Princes upheld the Austrian cause, and demanded of Prussia a declaration of pacific intentions. Regarding such an assumption of superiority as intolerable, Prussia at once withdrew from the Federation and occupied Holstein with its troops. Bismarck

thus found it possible to assault at one blow both the Federation and Austria with the full certainty that the attention of the most important of his enemies would be distracted by an Italian war.

The war which ensued astonished Europe by the rapidity of its events and the completeness of the results which attended it. On the 14th of June the Frankfort Diet decreed the mobilisation of the Federal army. The next day the Prussians entered Saxony and took Leipzig. From the 20th to the 23d of June three Prussian armies entered Bohemia from the north and from the east, and a gradual march of concentration began. Benedek, a general of high repute, commanded the Austrians. His attempts to check the advancing Prussians, while still separated, were unsuccessful; his troops were gradually forced together, and he finally found himself, in the neighbourhood of Königgrätz, separated from the combined army of the North and the Elbe under Prince Frederick Charles by a rivulet near the village of Sadowa, which gave its name to the battle. The Austrians held their ground well, and it seemed as though the Prussian advance had been checked, when suddenly the correctness of the combination devised by Von Moltke became apparent, the army of the Crown Prince coming from the east fell upon the Austrian right and rear, bringing about a complete catastrophe, and inflicting a defeat of the most crushing character upon the Austrians. The battle was fought upon the 3d of July, and was to all intents and purposes the completion of the war. Opposition within the limits of Germany had been destroyed by the capitulation of the Hanoverians at Langensalsza; and though a gleam of victory had fallen upon the Austrian arms at Custozza, where they had defeated the Italians, and again a few days later in a naval engagement off Lissa, the Emperor was glad to obtain the intervention of France, to surrender Venetia to Napoleon to be handed over to the Italians, and to make use of his mediation in completing an armistice and peace. The preliminary Treaty of Nikolsburg was signed on the 26th of July, the final Treaty of Prague on the 23d of August. Prussia obtained all that it desired. The existing German Bund was dissolved, Austria withdrew from the new arrangements of Germany. A northern and a southern confederacy were formed. At the head of the northern was Prussia. Sleswig and Holstein—with the exception of the northern district, the fate of which was to be settled by a popular vote—were transferred to Prussia, together with a large sum to defray the expenses of the war, a part of which was paid by Saxony. In six weeks Prussia had entirely defeated her two enemies,

War between
Austria and
Prussia.

had assumed the leadership of North Germany, and had incorporated with her dominions, Hanover, Hesse Cassel, Nassau, Hesse Homburg, and the Duchies on the Elbe. This great result, apart from the excellent organisation of the Prussian troops, is to be traced to the combinations planned by the eminent strategist Von Moltke at Berlin, and to the possession, in the breech-loading needle-gun, of a weapon which secured the Prussian soldier a terrible advantage by its rapidity of fire.

The policy of non-intervention, which had been adopted by the Government in the case of the German war, was maintained with respect to difficulties arising in Italy, where the addition of Venetia to the kingdom had again excited in the minds of enthusiastic patriots a desire to complete the union of the Peninsula, and to acquire Rome as the capital. The King of Italy was bound by his treaties with the French Emperor to respect the little dominion which had been left to the Papacy; and although the constant opposition of the Pope to the reforms set on foot by the Italian Ministry, and his refusal to recognise the Italian King, could not but cause considerable irritation, Victor Emmanuel honestly kept to his engagements. Italian volunteers however, at the head of whom Garibaldi placed himself, gathered round Rome, and determined to march against it. Though Garibaldi was arrested by the Italian Government and sent back to his island of Caprera, in October he escaped and joined the volunteers, who were then advancing towards Rome. The French Emperor under these circumstances thought it necessary that the army of occupation, which had been withdrawn at the close of 1866, should be again despatched to the support of the Pope. There was some risk that the Italian and French armies would come into collision. Fortunately in conjunction with the Papal troops the French General defeated the Garibaldians at Mentana before the Italians had intervened. The cause for any immediate action on their part was thus removed, but the French army remained at Civita Vecchia, a constant source of difficulty and irritation to the Italian nation. The English Government declined to take any very active part in this quarrel. With regard to the breach of Convention which was asserted as an excuse for the French expedition, they considered that they were not called upon to give an opinion, the question being one which lay between the countries interested alone. Lord Stanley went so far however as to inform the Emperor that he considered the expedition would have a bad effect in this country, and to express his hope that it might be withdrawn. The suggestion of a conference he rejected on

England maintains a policy of non-intervention.

the ground that it was useless to enter into conference without some definite programme, and that no such programme existed. The excitement caused by the death of the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico (June 19, 1867) called forth a still more definite assertion of the policy of non-intervention. When interrogated on the subject, Lord Stanley declared that, while deeply deploring the death of a gallant and amiable gentleman, he saw very grave objections to recording any judgment of the House upon his execution, and asked whether notice was to be taken of every case where the claims of one party, after a protracted civil war, had been followed by an unwise and sanguinary act of vengeance; whatever the power and influence of the House might be, it was only the Parliament of the United Kingdom, and not of the world.

On one point alone was England compelled to take an active part in questions of Continental interest. Luxemburg was ruled by the King of Holland as Grand Duke, and had formed a part of the German Confederation. On the re-formation of Germany, and the establishment of the North German Confederation under the leadership of Prussia, France felt that the strong fortress of Luxemburg—garrisoned as it was by Prussian troops—was little less than a standing threat. The Prussian Government acknowledged that the dissolution of the old Confederation reinstated the Grand Duke in his sovereign rights, and expressed its willingness to take into account the just susceptibilities of France. A Conference of the Powers who had signed the Treaty of 1839 guaranteeing the territory to the King of Holland was therefore assembled in London, and with unusual rapidity and unanimity a Treaty was arrived at, by which the neutrality of Luxemburg was established, the Prussian garrison withdrawn, and the fortifications destroyed, the arrangements being guaranteed collectively by the contracting Powers. It was urged against Lord Stanley that he was thus entering into engagements capable of indefinite extension. But his action was generally approved as leading immediately to peace, and laying no further burden upon England than had practically rested on it since the Treaty of 1839. It will be seen therefore that on the whole the only difference between the action of the Conservatives and the Liberals in the Foreign Office lay in the less pronounced and busy character of their intervention in the affairs of the Continent. In essentials both parties agreed in confining that intervention to advice and in pursuing a policy of peace.

The session of the spring of 1867, which had been so largely

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Conference to guarantee the neutrality of Luxemburg. May 1867.

occupied in the question of Reform, had allowed of one other important measure, more important perhaps in the possibilities which it implied than was at the time felt. Lord Carnarvon, the Colonial Minister, had the good fortune to bring to completion a work which had occupied his predecessors for some years, and to introduce and carry a Bill for the Confederation of the British North American Provinces. It may perhaps be regarded as a legitimate completion of the plans of Lord Durham. The idea was mentioned in his Report; its realisation was rendered easier by the thorough self-government which he had advocated. It was not however a new idea even then. It was very natural that, lying on the borders of a great Federation such as the United States, the scattered Provinces of British North America should think of imitating it. Again and again in various local provincial legislatures the question had been mooted, and the efforts of English Colonial Ministers directed towards carrying it out. The various obstacles which had from time to time arisen were at length removed, and the Confederated Dominion of Canada was now called into existence. The new Constitution, while claiming to resemble the English Constitution, bore in fact a closer resemblance to that of the United States. A House of Commons and a Senate constituted the central Parliament. The Senate consisted of seventy members nominated for life by the Governor-General, the House of Commons of members elected by the populations of the provinces, at the rate of one member for every 17,000 persons. The executive was vested in the Crown represented by the Governor-General. The Confederation at first included the two Canadas, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick; but other Provinces were allowed to join it at their pleasure, an opportunity accepted sooner or later by all the local legislatures, with the exception of that of Newfoundland. It was found possible to draw a line between those matters which should be regarded as local and left to the Provincial legislatures, and questions of more general policy over which the central Government had control. Considerable variety was thus allowed; and various systems—affecting even the methods by which the members of the central House of Commons were elected—are still maintained in the different Provinces. The numerical basis of representation, the free admission of new Provinces, and the diversity of local institutions, give an elasticity to the Confederation which alone can render such an arrangement possible. The connection with the Home Government is virtually confined to the acceptance of a Governor-General sent from England.

Confederation
of the British
North American
Provinces.
Feb. 1867.

In all other respects, in the full command of their law, their commercial policy, their taxes, and their military establishment, the inhabitants of the Dominion are virtually independent.

The idea of Federation thus illustrated was far-reaching. It still remains to be seen whether the principle it involved does not afford a solution to the great problem of maintaining a vast and in some respects incongruous empire consisting of colonial states already grown, or rapidly growing, to dimensions which fit them for independence, and already furnished with all the apparatus for separate self-government. But difficulties still lie in the way of the completion of an Imperial system. The foreign policy of England may expose its outlying dependencies to the dangers of wars in which their interests are in no way involved. The commercial policy of England may demand concessions to a system unsuitable to colonial conditions. Against such dangers it would appear that independence rather than federation affords the better safeguard. On the other side it would be difficult for England to allow either its foreign or commercial policy to be largely influenced, as would be the case were a central Parliament established, by the votes of representatives of countries with interests depending upon conditions of society different from its own, and liable to disputes which the increased colonisation of continental countries render probable, upon matters apparently immaterial to the inhabitants of the mother country. A closer feeling of national union, a greater amount of civic self-denial, than is yet to be found in either England or its colonies, would appear to be necessary for the realisation of any scheme of Imperial Federation. Yet it is not certain that over a more limited area the adoption of some form of Federation may not facilitate the much desired union of members of the empire whom differences of race, institutions, and usages, unfortunately tend to keep apart.

Although in all probability the confederation of the Canadas was the consequence of the view of colonial government prevalent in the Liberal party, it was in strict accordance with the enlarged notion of the Imperial position of England which was so strong a characteristic of Mr. Disraeli. Before the year was out an opportunity occurred of still further emphasising this view. Unexpectedly in November the Parliament was summoned for an autumn session to consider the means already adopted and to be adopted for an attack against the King of Abyssinia.

Our difficulties with that country were of some standing. Abyss-

Possibility of
the extension
of the Federal
system.

Disraeli's
view of Im-
perial policy.

sinia is a country occupied by a race claiming as their first sovereign the son of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon. In the midst of surrounding Mahomedan and Negro Powers it has maintained the Christian religion in the Coptic form. Internal dissensions had arisen among the chiefs, and Ras Ali, the late Grand-Vizier, had contrived to raise himself to a position of more or less generally accepted supremacy. His success was partly due to the assistance of two Englishmen, John Bell and Walter Plowden. At Plowden's instigation he had opened correspondence with England; and in 1850 Plowden, dignified by the name of Consul, had contracted a Treaty with him, aiming at the suppression of the slave-trade and opposition to the advance of the Turks in the direction of Nubia. But the empire of Ras Ali was of short duration. One of his subordinate chiefs of the name of Kassai rose in insurrection against him, defeated him, obtained the mastery over the other chiefs, and ascended the throne under the title of Theodore. The name Theodore implied a good deal. A traditional prophecy told that a former king of that name should return and restore the ancient glories of the House of Solomon, and root out the Mahomedan invaders; and it was as the representative of the Coptic Christians in opposition to the growing power of the French Catholic missionaries that Theodore made his appearance. On the fall of their late patron, Plowden and Bell had joined the usurper. As long as they lived his reign was fairly good and successful. But before 1861 both of them had fallen in battle (for the empire was a constant scene of insurrections), and from that time onwards, Theodore left to himself appears to have been nothing but a capricious tyrant. The English Government however thought it well to continue their relations with him. Mr. Cameron was sent to replace Mr. Plowden as Consul, and in various capacities—as artisan missionaries authorised by Bishop Gobat of Jerusalem, as Scotch missionaries, or, as in the case of Mr. Stern, as agents of the London Bible Society—a certain number of Europeans entered the country. The conduct of Consul Cameron does not seem to have been sufficiently careful considering the character of the man with whom he had to deal. A letter despatched by Theodore to the Queen was treated with little respect and received no answer; while Cameron, moving to and fro in the country, fell under suspicion of intriguing with the Turks. At length Theodore, who appears to have listened somewhat readily to calumnies brought to his ears against the Europeans, in the year 1864 apprehended the greater

Origin of the
Abyssinian
War.

part of them and imprisoned them in the fortress of Magdala. To rescue them the English Government thought it necessary to send a formal mission under Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Rassam, a Persian Christian. Though he encountered some difficulties at first, Mr. Rassam ultimately obtained access to the King, and succeeded as he believed in smoothing all obstacles in the way of the release of the prisoners. But at the moment of departure hastily summoned as though to bid farewell to the King, he himself and all the Europeans were suddenly apprehended and again thrown into prison. Beyond their detention they were not badly used; but no representations on the part of the English Government, which acted with extreme patience, could induce Theodore to surrender them. He probably had a notion that as long as he kept them they would serve as hostages, and give him a certain hold upon the English Government. At length, weary of negotiating, Lord Stanley in the spring of 1867 despatched an ultimatum, demanding their surrender in three months, and proceeded at once to prepare for armed intervention.

It was felt and asserted by the Government, that although to be entangled in a war with so miserable a potentate was not a desirable thing, the *prestige* of England suffered by the ill-treatment of its envoys and citizens, and that *prestige* was a factor in the British power in the East which could not be neglected. In the form which the preparations took, the idea of the Imperial character of the country and its close connection with the East was further illustrated. The operations were to have their base in India; 12,000 men, of whom 8000 were to be of the Indian army, were placed under the command of Sir Robert Napier, an engineer officer of much Indian repute. Sailing from Bombay, the troops were landed in the neighbourhood of Massowa in January 1868, with orders to march straight to the fortress of Magdala, and after having rescued the prisoners to return at once without any idea of conquest or annexation. The strength and completeness of the expedition was intended chiefly to force upon the Eastern mind the invincible power of England and the danger incurred by any ill-usage of British subjects. As the power of Theodore had been gradually undermined by his reckless tyranny, it is possible that a much smaller force would have proved sufficient. But the difficulties of the country were almost unknown; any failure, even momentary, would have ruined the objects in view. Sir Robert Napier carried out his duties with extreme thoroughness. The army was moved on by degrees, strong camps were established at intervals, and communications thoroughly

Successful
management
of the war
by Lord Napier.

secured. Scientific appliances overcame the want of water and the difficulties of transit, and finally an advanced column was pushed forward to Magdala. An assault from the remnant of Theodore's army was repulsed with little loss. Any terms short of complete surrender on the part of the King were refused, and a successful attack upon the fort, in the midst of which Theodore put an end to his own life, brought the expedition to a triumphant conclusion. Before the end of May the English force was again upon the Red Sea. If there was little glory to be won in fighting against so weak an adversary, England could at least congratulate itself that one of its little wars had been carried on in a difficult and almost unknown country with prudence and completeness, and with very slight loss.

To authorise the steps already taken, and to find means for the expenses of this war, an autumnal Parliament was summoned on the 19th of November. To this work it chiefly confined itself. The sum required was estimated at £2,000,000, and, as during the recess the preparations had been actively going on, the House had little choice but to accept the Government resolution granting that sum. It was wisely determined to throw the burden as far as possible upon the revenue of the country, and an extra penny was therefore added to the income-tax. But the Opposition complained of the necessity forced upon them, and of the employment by Government of money not yet granted. A further difficulty arose upon the declaration of the intention of the Ministry to throw a portion of the expenses upon the Indian Exchequer. They argued that the question was virtually an Indian one, that the necessity of the war arose chiefly from the effect which the impunity of Theodore would have upon the Eastern mind, and that therefore the interests involved were the interests of our Eastern Empire, rather than of England itself. This view found favour in Parliament, and the arrangements of Government were accepted.

During the whole of the year 1867 it had been found necessary to continue the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. The Conservative Ministry upon entering office in 1866 had been compelled to adopt without change the policy of their predecessors in that country. The danger to public order threatened by the continuation of the Fenian movement was still too evident to allow the Government to divest itself of the extraordinary powers which had been placed in its hands. The firm exercise of authority, and the failure of the Canadian raid, seemed for a while to have considerably lessened the activity of the Fenians, and

Autumn session, Nov. 1867.
Expenses of the war.

Continued danger from Fenianism.

indeed the gradual restoration of confidence and quiet appeared so probable, that on the opening of Parliament in 1867, words had been put into the Queen's Speech expressing a hope that no extraordinary powers would be any longer requisite. But almost at the very time that the words were uttered events were taking place which showed the fallacy of such a hope. On the 4th of February there was a rising in Kerry; the coastguard station was attacked, and the insurgents were only defeated by the employment of troops. It was plain that the smouldering embers of discontent were again on the point of bursting into a flame. The renewal of activity may perhaps be connected with a great meeting of Fenians held in America in January, at which the conspirators determined to carry the war into England. On the 11th of February information was received that an attempt would be made to surprise the Castle at Chester and carry off the arms and ammunition which were stored in it. The information proved to be true. From the trains in all directions strangers were observed pouring into the town. It was believed that by five o'clock in the afternoon as many as 1500 were collected. But precautions had been taken, special constables in great number enrolled, and the arrival of 500 men of the Guards despatched from London set at rest the deep anxiety under which the citizens were labouring. Finding themselves forestalled the conspirators had gradually withdrawn. One or two men were arrested in Chester, and sixty-seven others as they crossed from Holyhead to Ireland. Although it had proved abortive, the daring character of the threatened attempt—taken in connection with the renewed outbreaks in Ireland—induced Lord Naas, the Irish Secretary, to confess that the expressions in the Queen's Speech had been erroneous, and to ask for a renewal of the suspension for three months longer. Again it appeared that the Government had underrated the power of the conspiracy, and in May the Secretary thought it better to ask Parliament to authorise the continuation of the arbitrary power of Government for a whole year.

During all that time uneasiness and occasional outbreaks continued in Ireland, and the attempt to transplant the struggle to English soil was maintained. The reckless audacity with which this plan was pursued, and the carelessness for the loss of innocent life which characterised it, were illustrated by the successful rescue in the immediate neighbourhood of Manchester of two Fenian prisoners, and the partially successful attempt to blow up Clerkenwell prison. The

Futile attempt at Chester.

first occasion recalls the conduct of bush-rangers in the old convict colonies of Australia. Both the time and the route by which the prisoners were to be removed were known, and as the van, escorted by seven or eight unarmed policemen, was proceeding along Hyde Road, it was attacked by a considerable number of men well armed with revolvers who had gradually collected in a neighbouring public-house. Four of the policemen were shot, Sergeant Brett who sat inside the van was murdered by firing through the door, the keys taken from him, and the prisoners released. The assailants were led by a young man of the name of Allen. The greater part of his comrades got off in safety, but he was himself captured, and with two of his companions convicted and hung. There was about this attempt at least a show of audacious courage, though the possession of revolvers in an assault upon unarmed men somewhat lessens the claim to admiration. The attempt at Clerkenwell can lay claim to no extenuating circumstances. A barrel of gunpowder was exploded under the wall of the jail to afford to Burke and Casey, two prisoners within, a means of making their escape. It was unsuccessful, but produced the death of four innocent people and the severe injury of 120 more. The wickedness was equalled only by the clumsiness of the conception. It was expected that the prisoners would be walking at that time behind the demolished wall. A warning which had been given to the Governor of the prison had induced him to keep them from the spot. The care which prevented their escape almost certainly preserved their lives. For a while the excitement in London was very great. Thousands of special constables were sworn in, and for some days there was a constant dread of some further calamity.

English statesmen could not regard such a long and vigorous though ineffectual struggle as being causeless. The condition of the country which could allow of such deep dissatisfaction, and could fill Irishmen who had sought a home abroad with so persistent a hatred to England, evidently required the closest attention. But the pressure of the Reform Bill and the necessity for carrying out to the full the repression of disorder prevented the completion of any remedial measures during the year. More than one considerable debate took place in Parliament upon Irish matters, but only served to make plain the difficulties which the subject offered, and the divergence of opinion as to the best method of removing them. While some thought that the question was entirely agrarian and the cure

Rescue of
Fenian
prisoners at
Manchester.
Sep. 18, 1867.

Attack on
Clerkenwell
Prison. Dec. 13.

to be found either in a great transference of property or increased security of tenure by the introduction of long leases, others thought that the question was a political one resting mainly upon the feeling of their inferiority forced upon the Irish, and most clearly represented to their mind by the dominant position of the Irish Church. At no time probably has the very complex character of the Irish problem been more clearly shown, or the impossibility of curing the evils which beset the country by any single act of the legislature, or by any series of acts tending in one and the same direction. For the Fenian movement seems to have been different from any of those which had preceded it. It was not agrarian, for a very small proportion of those apprehended during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus were of the agricultural class. It was not religious, for the priests of Ireland were distinctly opposed to it. It was social in the sense that it aimed at an entire change of the conditions of property. But before all it was national, aiming at nothing short of the independence of the Island. It was the outcome of the cherished hatred of English rule, transplanted to a foreign country whither the ablest and most energetic of the Irish had betaken themselves. Amid the free institutions of America divergences in religious creed had been forgotten, and democratic ideas far beyond those which had ever found any real expression in the life and government of the United States had been nourished, for the partial dissolution of society in the civil war had engendered a belief in force and a strange carelessness both of life and of order. The movement which arose under these conditions was one which rejected all compromise, and shrank from no excesses either by covert or by overt war. Ireland was no longer to be satisfied with English concession or regenerated by English legislation, but was to be established in complete independence under the shadow of the great Republic from which the movement started. Unfortunately there were only too many real grievances in the Island calling for remedy. As a means of obtaining national independence the movement had proved abortive. English statesmen persuaded themselves that its efforts had been thoroughly suppressed; there was a tendency even to laugh at the completeness of its failure. This conclusion was a false one. The feelings which had inspired the movement and been called into active life by it did not die out, but became a new element in the tangled web of Irish discontent. But its apparent failure led to a misapprehension of the depth and completeness of Irish aspirations for independence; the Parliamentary leaders continued as of old to press for this

or that amelioration or concession as the one thing necessary for the restoration of Irish loyalty; and the battle continued to be fought upon the old fields of Parliamentary reform or religious equality or improved land tenure, but always upon the fundamental hypothesis that the end at which to aim was the production of a complete similarity between the two countries.

It was however plain that the Irish question in some shape or other would chiefly occupy the attention of the Parliamentary session of 1868. It remained to be seen how the dexterity of Mr. Disraeli, at the head of a Ministry in face of an Opposition considerably superior to itself in numbers, would succeed in maintaining his position by avoiding points likely to produce a union among the broken sections of his opponents. He had already in similar circumstances guided his party with success through the difficulties of the Reform Bill. He had now before him the more difficult task of legislating for Ireland. It needed only the selection of some central and generally accepted reform as the battle-cry of the Opposition to drive him from his place. The failing health of Lord Derby had already practically placed Mr. Disraeli at the head of the Government; and only a fortnight after the meeting of Parliament it was publicly notified that Lord Derby's resignation had on the 25th of February been accepted by the Queen, and that Mr. Disraeli had assumed the office of First Lord of the Treasury. Lord Cairns was appointed to the Chancellorship and Mr. Ward Hunt to the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer which Mr. Disraeli had vacated; in other respects the Ministry continued as before. The programme of the Government, as announced in the preceding autumn, had included various Bills for the completion of Parliamentary Reform in Ireland and Scotland, for the prevention of corrupt practices at elections, for national education and other matters, and the Government proceeded at once to introduce some of these measures. But they had none of them advanced far on their course when they were interrupted by the introduction of the Irish question, which had already been acknowledged by Lord Stanley to be the critical question of the time.

On the 10th of March Mr. Maguire proposed a motion on the state of Ireland which elicited from Lord Mayo (late Lord Naas), the Irish Secretary, an explanation of the policy which the Government intended to pursue. He denied both the disaffection of the agricultural classes of Ireland, and the causes to which it was attributed. He pointed out the exclu-

Critical position of the Ministry, Feb. 1868.

Debates on the condition of Ireland.

sively Irish character of the Irish Executive: the Bench, the Municipal authorities, and the Constabulary were all Irish. He proved by statistics a gradual improvement in Ireland, a steady rise of rent and of wages, an increase of its cultivated area and of the value of its live-stock. He illustrated the care which England took of Irish interests by the fact that £18,000,000 had been advanced by the Treasury for improvements, and substantiated his assertion of the absence of agricultural disloyalty by the facts that agrarian crime had sunk from 1000 cases in 1844 to 87 cases in 1866, and that of the 1100 men arrested during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act only 24 had got their living by the land. It was natural that with such views the Secretary should propose no large remedial measures. Fenianism, a conspiracy of alien growth, must, he said, be combated by a continuation of the strong powers placed in Government hands by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, a measure not of repression, but of protection to the Irish peasant from disastrous foreign influences. The existing system of land tenure should not be disturbed, although some means for securing compensation for improvements, increasing leases, and encouraging written contracts, would probably be desirable. But as there were no doubt grave differences of opinion upon many points, a Commission would be issued to inquire into the relations of landlord and tenant, and a second to report upon primary education. He proposed to establish a new Catholic University, and with regard to the Irish Church, while awaiting the report of a Committee at present sitting on it, he indicated that there could be no necessity for hasty disestablishment, and that even though policy and justice might demand an equalisation of Church establishments, it was not by confiscation, but by a readjustment of the property, that such a result should be obtained. The announcement was one which tended to bring out to the full all the different views of the Opposition. Mr. Mill demanded the establishment of a peasant proprietary, and laughed at the idea of a paid Irish priesthood. Mr. Lowe threw scorn on the idea of peasant farmers and declared that the sectarian university was a mere sop to the Ultramontane clergy. Mr. Horsman declared that the Bill was one of mere procrastination; and Mr. Bright, pointing out the full meaning of the co-existence in Ireland of material prosperity and extensive disloyalty, traced the phenomenon to the twofold cause of the absentee landlords and the alien Church.

In the midst of the chaos of opinion, it began to be evident that the one point on which the Liberal party might be brought to agree

was the necessity for the disestablishment of the Protestant Church in Ireland; and with his usual ability as the spokesman of the party, Mr. Gladstone somewhat surprised the world by accepting that measure as the rallying point of the Opposition, and, while criticising in no very certain manner the other projects for Irish improvement which had been produced, announced with deep solemnity his conviction that the Irish Church as a State Church must cease to exist. This declaration of opinion has been frequently spoken of as the expression of a remarkable and sudden conversion, and as a denial of all the former convictions of his life. A letter in which four years previously he had declared the question of disestablishment in Ireland to lie beyond the field of practical politics, was alleged in proof of his rapid change of front; yet there are utterances of his with regard to the Colonial Church which might certainly have led to the belief that he had no strong prejudice in favour of the curtailment of the full liberty of the Church by State intervention, and the letter itself so strongly urged against him implies that already at the time when it was written the writer was convinced of the theoretical advantages which would arise from disestablishment in Ireland. The step which at that time lay beyond the sphere of politics had since then become the one practical point on which party politics could be made to hinge, and as such was at once taken up by Mr. Gladstone. At all events it proved admirably adapted for its purpose. The nationalist who saw in the Church "the badge of conquest," the Roman Catholic who regarded it as an unfairly privileged rival, the secularist who regarded as erroneous all attempts to connect government with religion, the High Churchman who hated the principle of State control over ecclesiastical freedom, and the man of common-sense who recognised the glaring anomaly of a national Church including a mere fraction of the nation, were all able to combine in an assault upon the institution, and to persuade themselves that its destruction was the most important step towards the reconciliation of Ireland.

The leader of the Opposition having found firm ground for action followed up his declaration of opinion by the introduction of three resolutions. The first contained the gist of the matter. It declared that in the opinion of the House it was necessary that the Established Church of Ireland should cease to exist as an establishment, due regard being had to all personal interests and to all individual rights of property. The other two were in fact corollaries of it, and stated that subject to the fore-

Demand for the
disestablishment
of the
Irish Church.

Gladstone's
three resolutions
on the
Irish Church.

going consideration it was expedient to prevent the creation of new personal interests by the exercise of any public patronage, and to confine the operations of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of Ireland to objects of immediate necessity, pending the final decision of Parliament, and that an address should be "presented to Her Majesty praying her to place at the disposal of Parliament her interest in the temporalities of the Archbishoprics, Bishoprics, and other ecclesiastical dignities and benefices of Ireland and in the custody thereof." The 30th of March was appointed for the debate on the resolutions. Before the day arrived Mr. Disraeli had found an opportunity in a letter to Lord Dartmouth of stating that the crisis of which so much had been said was in England rather than in Ireland, "for the purpose is now avowed, and that by a powerful party, of destroying that sacred union between Church and State which has hitherto been the chief means of our civilisation and is the only security for our religious liberty." This expresses the chief ground of opposition to the measure. The Prime Minister asserted, not without attracting much contemptuous commentary, that the Ritualists and the Roman Catholics were in league to destroy the Church of England. He believed in the advantage of endowments partly, as he said, as a means of preventing Government from degenerating into mere police, partly because the interference of the State secured a large amount of religious freedom within the limits of the Church itself; and he saw—what his opponents at the time vigorously denied but what appears to be unquestionably true—that the principles involved in the attack upon the Irish Church must sooner or later justify an attack upon the Church in England as well. The reasonableness, even the abstract correctness, of his views seem to have made him forget or despise the special circumstances which rendered the abolition of the Church in Ireland little short of a necessity. For in fact the conditions which alone gave truth to the Premier's views were entirely wanting. The higher aims implied by a junction of Church and State are obtainable only when the enforcement of them is supported by national feeling, and a Government sinks to something even lower than a mere police administration when its union with religion consists only in the maintenance of a hollow institution repugnant and even insulting to the general sense of the people governed.

There was no difficulty in proving that such was the condition of the Irish Church. Its maintenance produced no practical oppression, but its existence and recognition by Government was a standing

Disraeli's views
on disestablishment.

memorial of the cause of all Irish difficulties—the rule of the minority. Neither its history, nor its present condition, justified for a moment its claim to nationality. Called into existence by the forcible appointment of Protestant Bishops by the Tudors, endowed with the forfeited property of patriotic rebels by the early Stuarts, officered chiefly by men of English birth and training, and for years supported by penal laws of the greatest stringency, it remained the Church of probably not more than a tenth of the nation. In Connaught the Anglicans were but 4 per cent. of the population, in Leinster 11 per cent., in Munster 5, and even in Protestant Ulster only 20 per cent. In hundreds of parishes there was no church, the incumbent was an absentee and the duties required for the care of the dozen or so members of the congregation were performed for some slight pittance by a curate. In 1849 Mr. George Moore could say in Parliament, “I myself pay tithes in eight parishes; in the whole of these there is not one church, one glebe, or one resident clergyman. I am not aware that there is a single Protestant in the whole eight parishes, and I do not believe that divine service according to the Protestant ritual has been celebrated in any of them since the Reformation.” A revenue of about £600,000 drawn from tithes and land was in the hands of this empty and pretentious corporation. Many times propositions either for its reformation or for a division of its property had been brought before the House, only to be met by the Government, whether it were Whig or Conservative, with a direct refusal to consider the question, or by a declaration that the time for considering it had not yet come. Of such a character had been the reply given by Sir Robert Peel in 1844, and the letter of Mr. Gladstone in 1864.

Circumstances had now convinced that statesman that the pressing necessity which Sir Robert Peel had refused to recognise, and the time for Parliamentary action which he had himself declared to be still distant, had at length arrived. Once convinced of this, he set to work with his usual energy. The union of the Opposition rendered the eventual success of the resolutions almost a matter of certainty, when they came to be directly opposed on principle. But Lord Stanley as the spokesman of Government attempted to raise a side issue on a very reasonable ground; and when, on the 30th of March, Mr. Gladstone moved for a Committee of the whole House to consider the Acts of Parliament relating to the establishment, Lord Stanley produced an amendment to the effect that, although modifications in the temporalities of the Church of Ireland might on the report of the Commis-

Condition of
the Irish
Church.

sion appear necessary, any proposition tending to the disestablishment and disendowment of that Church ought to be reserved for a new Parliament. The late Reform Bill created a vastly extended constituency, and it was not unreasonable to hold that so important a constitutional change as the destruction of the Irish Church should be reserved for what was now allowed to be the true representation of the country. A four days' debate resulted in a large majority in favour of Mr. Gladstone's motion, and on the 13th of April the first resolution was carried by a majority of sixty-five. Two such severe defeats would under ordinary circumstances have been followed by the immediate resignation of the Ministry, and such was the course which the Liberals considered to be imperatively forced upon Mr. Disraeli. It might on the other hand have produced a dissolution. Mr. Disraeli did not immediately adopt either course. In spite of the bitterest invectives he neither resigned nor dissolved. In his explanation on the 4th of May he stated that in his interview with the Queen he had first advised dissolution, at the same time offering to resign; that the Queen had taken time to consider, and had decided to decline his resignation, but to authorise him to dissolve if the state of public business required it. Rather unreasonably the Liberals, very angry at being deprived of immediate power, attacked the Premier with bitter violence, accusing him of forcing the Queen unconstitutionally to the front, of keeping in his hands a penal power of dissolution if Parliament displeased him, of having been ready to appeal to the existing constituencies in spite of Lord Stanley's motion, and of having advised a dissolution upon no great principle, since the majority in the House was clear, but merely for the purpose of establishing as he hoped his own Ministry. The Premier and his friends denied all idea of the penal use of dissolution, and while declaring their intention to vote against further measures of disestablishment professed themselves willing to facilitate the completion of the Reform measures so as to allow of a dissolution in the summer and an appeal to the new constituencies in the autumn. Mr. Gladstone thought it necessary to push forward his measure. His two remaining resolutions were carried, together with a suspensory Act to prevent new appointments in the Church of Ireland, and to restrain the proceedings of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. A solid groundwork as he thought would thus be laid for immediate legislation in the new Parliament. The suspensory Act was thrown out in the House of Lords, but the majority with which it was carried in the

Government
defeated in
debates on the
Irish Church.

Disraeli refuses
to resign.

House of Commons gave a fresh indication of the complete superiority of the Opposition in that House.

In accordance with the promises of the Government the Reform Bills for Scotland and Ireland were completed. By the Irish Bill the franchise in the boroughs was lowered from £8 to £4; no alteration was made in the counties, and a lodger franchise of £10 annual value was created. Objection was made to the maintenance of the £12 franchise in counties as being too high, and to the introduction of the £4 rating in boroughs, while household suffrage had been granted in England, but the Government carried its measure, which added about 28,000 voters in the boroughs, and slightly lowered the number in the counties. With regard to Scotland the Government proposed a Bill similar in principle to the English Bill. The borough franchise was to be extended to all householders paying rates. In the counties the ownership of land of the clear annual value of £5, or the occupation of a holding of £12 was to confer the franchise. Seven new seats were to be given to Scotland and to form an addition to the members in the House. It was upon this point that opposition arose. An increase of the representation was much disliked, and finally it was agreed that seven small English boroughs should be disfranchised and their representatives given to Scotland. Another change of some importance was made in Committee. The rating qualification attached to the franchise was removed, but the occupation qualification for counties raised to £14. With these alterations the proposition of the Government was carried. A Bill arranging the boundaries of boroughs completed the Reform legislation.

The indications given by Mr. Disraeli before the last election as to the probable topics which would occupy Parliament had proved correct. Public attention had been directed almost exclusively to the representation and the Church. The wide Reform Bill which had been passed had brought one of those questions to a satisfactory conclusion. On the other, indissolubly though almost accidentally bound up with the difficulties of Ireland, the fate of the Ministry was hanging. But on one point at least in connection with the Church a settlement had been arrived at. The vexed question of compulsory Church rates, which since 1833 had constantly been before Parliament, was set at rest. In this case as in that of the representation the solution took a liberal form, in spite of the known wishes of the party in power. Mr. Gladstone, adopting a suggestion let fall by Mr. Bright, had introduced a Bill on the

Irish and
Scottish Reform
Bills carried.
July 1868.

Abolition of
Compulsory
Church rates.

19th of February embodying a sort of compromise. Some of the details were changed in the Upper House but the principle was accepted; and by the Bill as passed, while all power of compulsory enforcement of rates was taken away from the vestries, and thus the grievance of the dissenters removed, the machinery of the vestries remained untouched, and they were allowed to raise voluntary rates. A body, the name and powers of which were well known was thus maintained, and in many instances where dissenters were few little if any practical change resulted.

The necessary business having been got through, Parliament was prorogued on the 31st of July on the understanding that a dissolution should take place as soon as possible, and an appeal be made to the new constituencies. The Ministry were able to introduce at least one satisfactory clause in the Queen's Speech when they stated that it had proved unnecessary for some time to exercise in Ireland the exceptional powers granted to the Executive, and that no person was at that time detained under the provisions of the Act for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. The elections, which immediately followed the dissolution in November, were naturally watched with great interest, as the result of the new Reform Bill was as yet uncertain. In Scotland and the English boroughs it secured a great success for the Liberal party, but in the counties the Conservatives obtained considerable triumphs. Mr. Gladstone was defeated for South-West Lancashire, Lord Hartington lost his seat for the Northern division of the same county. Upon the whole return the gain of the Liberal party was about 15, and the Parliament was estimated to consist of 389 Liberals and 272 Conservatives. An examination of the total number of votes recorded showed a Liberal majority of 524,709. The minority clause had in most cases produced the result intended, but in Glasgow and Birmingham the Liberal majority was so overwhelming that three members of that party were in each case elected. It is observable that there were no less than 227 new members in the House. The preponderance of his opponents was so clear that Mr. Disraeli wisely determined to avoid the waste of time which must have attended his reappearance in the House as Premier at the head of a certain minority, and resigned on the 4th of December before the meeting of Parliament.

Dissolution of
Parliament and
new elections.

Resignation of
Ministry.
Dec. 4, 1868.

CHAPTER XI.

MR. GLADSTONE'S MINISTRY, December 5, 1868.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Mr. Gladstone.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Hatherley.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Ripon.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Kimberley.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Lowe.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Bruce.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Granville.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Clarendon.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Mr. Cardwell.
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Duke of Argyll.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Mr. Childers.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Bright.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Lord Hartington.
<i>President of the Poor-Law Board,</i>	Mr. Goschen.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Lord Dufferin.
<i>Vice-President of Committee of Council on Education,</i>	Mr. W. E. Forster.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Spencer.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. O'Hagan.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Mr. Chichester Fortescue.

The following changes took place in July 1870, on Lord Clarendon's death :—

<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Halifax.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Kimberley.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Granville.

The following changes took place in February 1871 :—

<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Mr. Goschen.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Mr. Monsell.
<i>President of the Local Government Board,</i>	Mr. Stansfeld.
<i>Chief Secretary for Ireland,</i>	Lord Hartington.

The following changes took place in October 1872 :—

<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Selborne.
<i>Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Mr. Childers.

The following changes took place in September 1873 :—

<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Gladstone.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Lowe.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Mr. Bruce (Lord Aberdeen).

AS a matter of course on Mr. Disraeli's resignation Mr. Gladstone, for whom a seat had been found at Greenwich, was

called upon by the Queen to form a Ministry. With unusual rapidity he collected a Cabinet, including with the chief leaders of the Whigs several of the most important members of the more advanced Liberal section, among them Mr. Bright. The new Premier, in his address to the electors of Greenwich, pointed out as objects of special attention certain errors as he conceived in the new Reform Bill, especially the want of proper security for free voting; the question of education, in the Universities, in the grammar-schools of the middle class, and in its primary branch; economy and retrenchment, disregarded as he declared by his predecessors; and lastly, and of most importance, the Irish question in its twofold aspects of the Church and the Land.

The events of the last session made it necessary that the settlement of the Irish Church should become the prominent measure of the new Parliament. Its disestablishment had formed the rallying-point of the broken forces of the Liberal party; Mr. Gladstone's resolutions with regard to it had caused the fall of the Conservative Ministry; it was for the especial purpose of carrying it out that he had been called to power, and early in the session, on the 1st of March, he rose to explain to the House his intentions with regard to it. From that day to the end of July it formed the chief topic of discussion both in Parliament and outside. Seldom has a Bill excited more interest or more vehement opposition. It seemed to touch some of the principles most tenderly cherished by a large number of Englishmen; the union of Church and State, the supremacy of Protestantism, the sanctity of property. Robbery and confiscation were words freely used with regard to it—words rendered more bitter in their meaning because the robbery was applied to sacred things and carried with it to many minds the entire dissociation of politics and religion. The measure, as explained by Mr. Gladstone in a speech of extreme lucidity, involved many difficult details, but consisted virtually in the transference of all the property of the Irish Church to the nation, the restoration to a new and independent Church body of a sufficient portion to satisfy all vested interests, and the appropriation of the surplus to the relief of unavoidable calamities and sufferings not provided for by the Poor-Law. The wealth of the Irish Church consisted of the tithes, of lands, and of money. The tithe—already commuted to a rent-charge—was to be purchased by the landlords, and was estimated to produce £9,000,000. The lands or permanent rents were valued at £6,250,000. On the whole, including the

Gladstone's
Ministry.
Dec. 5, 1868.

Bill for the
disestablish-
ment of the
Irish Church
introduced.
March 1869.

"regium donum," or gift to the Presbyterians, and the Maynooth grant, which were to be withdrawn as a natural consequence of the disestablishment of the Church, the sum amounted to about £16,000,000. The disestablishment was to take place on the 1st of January 1871. All incumbents, including the Bishops, were to be compensated for their life interests. The same rule was to apply to curates, their stipends having been previously deducted from the income on which the compensation to the incumbents was calculated. Those churches which were in good repair and could be used were to be left in the hands of the new Church body, as were also the parsonage houses, subject to the repayment to the State of the building charges already advanced by Government. Private endowments given since the year 1660 also remained in the hands of the Church. In all, Mr. Gladstone calculated in the course of the debates that Parliament would restore about £10,000,000 to the Church, when re-formed as a voluntary association. The income of the surplus was according to the preamble of the Bill not to be applied to religious purposes, but to meet unavoidable calamity, and should be used, it was suggested, for the support of schools for the deaf and dumb, lunatic and idiot asylums, and various forms of hospitals. The opposition was based upon the grounds already indicated. Mr. Disraeli spoke of the Bill as one of sheer confiscation, reiterating his abstract admiration for an endowed religion, for the dignity with which it invested the civil government, and the comparative freedom which it secured. But there was about his opposition a want of earnestness which seemed to prove that he recognised the certainty of defeat. Nor were his arguments difficult to answer. The union of the Protestant Church with the State in Ireland had certainly produced no good results on the government; it had tended to accentuate religious differences and render them political, and the Establishment had signally failed in all the duties of a national Church. With regard to confiscation, the supporters of the Bill could answer that when money has been given to Corporations for a special end, and that end has neither been attained nor appears possible of attainment, or when the property thus given does not seem to have been rightly used, it is the duty of the State to intervene. The arguments on both sides were urged with much ability during long and brilliant debates; but the state of parties in the new Parliament rendered the passage of the Bill a certainty, no important amendment was carried in committee, and it passed the Lower House by a majority of more than a hundred.

The public had detected an air of unreality in the defence of the Church in the Lower House, for the certainty of the conclusion had prevented the adoption of that tone of earnestness which the strong feelings excited outside the walls of Parliament demanded. In the Upper House, where the fate of the Bill was by no means so certain, the case was different. The debate on the second reading was marked by unusual earnestness and ability, but the majority of the Lords felt that the national will had been too clearly expressed to allow of the entire rejection of the Bill. It was therefore passed, but with the well understood intention that considerable changes should be forced upon the Government in committee. Accordingly many important amendments were introduced, both in committee and subsequently on the third reading. They included an alteration of the date, postponing for a year the time of disestablishment; the substitution of a lump sum for the personal commutation of incumbents' stipends; the restitution without payment of the parsonage houses and glebes; the inclusion of all endowments, whether Crown or private, in the sum to be restored to the Church body, and the removal of the date 1660 to a point considerably earlier; and lastly the appropriation subject to the approval of Parliament of the surplus to religious purposes. It was calculated that these amendments would on the whole add £4,000,000 to the £10,000,000 which the Commons had consented to restore, and that in a manner which would render the Bill little short of a measure of re-endowment. Thus amended, the Bill passed the House, coupled however with a protest on the part of forty-two peers headed by Lord Derby briefly summing up the chief arguments against the Bill: the danger of beginning the severance of Church and State, the shock which would be given to the security of property, the alienation of the loyal Protestants, and the weakness of a voluntary Church to withstand the organisation of Rome. The amendments appeared so vitally to affect the principle of the Bill that the Government regarded them as inadmissible, and when they were brought down to the House of Commons Mr. Gladstone moved that all the most important of them should be rejected. The indirect opposition of the Lords had roused the angry feelings of the Liberal party both in the House and in the country. Mr. Gladstone had no difficulty in carrying his motion, and as the Lords appeared to be equally firm in their determination to maintain their amendments, a decided and dangerous breach between the two branches of the legislature appeared imminent. To the general surprise the crisis was avoided. Lord Cairns rose in the House

The amendments of the Lords defeated.

of Lords and explained that, considering the dangerous position of affairs, he had taken upon himself the responsibility of entering into negotiations with Lord Granville without consulting his friends; the result had been a compromise which he recommended his party to accept. Under the show of compromise it was in fact a surrender. Instead of the additional £4,000,000 the new Church was to be satisfied with £850,000; a lump sum of half a million was to cover all the claims for private endowments; the old date of disestablishment was to be maintained; while the definite appropriation of the surplus to any specific objects, whether religious or charitable, was omitted from the Bill, and its employment left in the hands of Parliament. Mr. Gladstone as a matter of course supported the arrangement which his colleague had made, and recommended the House to accept the compromise at once. His suggestion being complied with the Bill became law, and the great question of disestablishment was set at rest.

Mr. Gladstone had seen in the condition of the Irish Church, full as it was of obvious anomalies, the best means of gathering his party around him. He had been successful; and finding himself at the head of a powerful majority, he did not shrink from attacking the far more difficult question of the land. It was generally recognised that the political agitation in Ireland found its chief support in agrarian discontent. All parties in England were anxious to believe that the pronounced disloyalty of the Fenian movement was a thing of foreign growth, and it was customary to point triumphantly to the fact that but a small number of the agricultural population had been involved in it. There was some truth in this view. The priesthood had declared itself opposed to Fenianism, and the bulk of the people took no active part in it; but on the other hand there was no sign of popular opposition to the movement, nor any attempt to support the power of the law. Even granting the slightness of the co-operation afforded by the agricultural classes to the Irish-American propaganda, it remained to be explained why the Irish emigrants in America were burning with hatred against the English Government, and why there was sufficient sympathy with this feeling among the farmers and peasantry of Ireland to allow of any reasonable hope of a successful insurrection.

The answer to both questions was to be found in the concentrated animosity existing between the landlord and tenant class, a hostility so pronounced and so long-lived that it was expressed without exaggeration in the commonly used words, "the land war." There were

Reform of the
Irish land
laws.

many reasons for this severance of classes. For the most part placed in possession of their property after conquest and confiscation of which the memory was not forgotten, and by changes in the law which had suddenly obliterated the whole pre-existing system of tribal property, differing generally from their tenants in religion and in race, frequently absentees, and the representatives of a stern ascendancy supported by penal laws of fearful severity, the landlords of Ireland had failed to acquire that position of friendly and unquestioned superiority which they held in England. But old and historic animosity could scarcely have survived through several centuries had not the land system tended constantly to preserve it. Theoretically the land law of Ireland was much the same as that of England. Practically applied in a country where the conditions of life were dissimilar, its working produced very different results. In Ireland, as in England, the land was legally the absolute possession of the landlord, to use as he would, to let on any terms he pleased, and to whom he pleased. In Ireland, as in England, the occupier was supposed to enter into a free contract with the landlord for the use of the land. In England the supposition was practically true. The tenant was usually a man of substance, free to move to any part of the country he might prefer, a business man, in fact, whose trade was agriculture. Failing the opportunity to employ his capital in that particular business, other means for its employment were readily open to him. In Ireland the tenant was in the vast majority of cases a poor man, with just capital enough to carry on a little farm by his own labour, and without any other possible means of livelihood. While in the one case the landlord was compelled by the competition of capital to limit his demands for rent, and to treat his tenant as an equal party in a free bargain, in Ireland the competition lay wholly on the other side; the tenant must have land or starve, the landlord was absolute master of the position. This primary difference went hand in hand with a second of even more importance. In England the landlord let to his tenant a *farm*. He erected the buildings and kept them in substantial repair; he carried out, or assisted in carrying out, all improvements; at the end of the contract between himself and his tenant it was not unreasonable that he should regard the improvements as his own. In Ireland, though there were exceptions, the prevalent custom was that the landlord should let the *land* only; the tenant put up such buildings as he required, and carried out improvements at his own cost; in very many cases the whole value of the property came from

The Irish and
English land
systems con-
trasted.

the tenant's labour. Yet legally, as in England, upon the close of a tenancy the landlord appropriated the whole of the buildings and improvements. Circumstances had brought it about that the common tenure of the farmers in Ireland was tenancy at will. They were without lease or other written contract, and liable to be removed from their holdings at six months' notice. There were no doubt considerable tracts of land where the English system existed in its proper form; on some estates there were large farms with the improvements and buildings paid for by the landlord, and occupied by farmers of substance holding leases; but generally speaking, what may be called the Irish system prevailed, consisting of small holdings, some very small, occupied by men themselves labourers, improved at the cost of the tenant and held at will.

From these conditions arose an opposition in the mind of the tenant between law and right. He was unable to persuade himself that that law was righteous which enabled his landlord, by the mere exertion of his will, to rob him of the fruits of his industry, and turn him, stripped perhaps of all his property, loose upon the world. The greater part of the atrocious agrarian crimes of Ireland are traceable to this cause. Eviction implied not only probable starvation, but carried with it a legal robbery against which the tenant had no redress. The inequality of the law drove him to seek for justice in other directions, and associations, at first violent and open, but subsequently even more dangerous in their secrecy, with a terrible and inexorable code of vengeance, filled Ireland with barbarous murders in the effort to give effect to the wild popular idea of justice. It is not necessary that there should have been many acts of harshness or injustice to excite the angry feeling of the people; a few notorious instances occurring from time to time would be sufficient to show only too plainly the possibility of such action, and to excite in the tenants a general feeling of insecurity, and a widespread abhorrence of the law which tolerated and supported such arbitrary conduct. It would be unjust to speak of the landlords as a class as tyrannical or cruel. In many cases estates were kindly managed, and the custom which regarded the improvements as the property of the tenants was respected. But there were too many examples of a contrary description. The horrors of the famine had given rise to a strong conviction that the population of the island was excessive; and not only in pursuit of better rents, but in the full belief that they were really improving the condition of the country, landlords had entered upon the process of

Inevitable consequences of the Irish system.

clearing their estates, and carried it out undeterred by the terrible results of eviction. Less praiseworthy objects had sometimes led to similar results; there were cases in which the tenantry of estates were kept under continual notice of ejectment, and thus practically entirely at the command of their landlords; there were instances of evictions for political reasons, for religious reasons, or for infractions of the arbitrary rules of the estate. The very efforts of the English Parliament to relieve the country from the pressure of poverty, and to introduce more capital, had increased rather than diminished the evil. By that series of Acts which were incorporated in the Landed Estates Act, the legislature had intended to relieve the insolvent landlords, and to supply their place by a class of wealthier men. But with freer sale, the possession of land had become desirable merely as an investment, and considerable landed property had passed into the hands of men determined to make the best of their purchase, and to work their land to the best advantage for themselves, irrespective of their tenants.

There is little doubt that the clearances and the Encumbered Estates Act had in part produced the effect desired. The wealth of the country had considerably increased, the value of the live-stock upon the land had nearly doubled, wages had since the time of the Devon Commission risen more than a half, and although rents had increased they were lower in proportion to the product of the land. But it is not always when at its lowest depression that a people or a class are most conscious of the ills from which they suffer. The very improvement in his material condition rendered it more grievous to the Irish peasant farmer that he might at any moment be legally robbed of the fruits of his labour and outlay. The extreme demand based upon this feeling was for fixity or perpetuity of tenure. To many men, who regarded such an arrangement as too great an encroachment upon the rights of property, something closely analogous to it, and already existing in some parts of Ireland, appeared necessary. For there was one part of the country in which the inequality of the law was somewhat repaired by usage. By what was known as "the Ulster custom," the tenant was allowed to continue his holding, though without written agreement, so long as the rent was paid, and to part with it if he so chose upon payment for the goodwill by the incoming tenant, and thus practically to receive compensation for his improvements. The crying injustice of the law was indeed so generally felt that in many other parts of Ireland, under various

Demand of the tenants for fixity of tenure, freedom of sale, and fair rent.

forms, some custom of the kind existed. But it was after all a custom only, and though generally observed, was liable to be disregarded. The law could not recognise any limitation of a freehold, or allow to the tenant any joint interest with the landlord in the land. To give the Ulster custom the sanction of law would have satisfied in part, but only in part, the requirements of the Irish tenants. For their conception of property in land was widely different from that held by the greater part of Englishmen. They did not recognise the landlord's right to do what he pleased with his land; they understood that he had a claim to a fair rent, and were at this time certainly willing to pay it. But, subject to the payment of the rent, they thought the occupier had a real interest in the land. This interest they considered that the occupier had a right to sell. The rent they thought should be fixed, not by competition, in which, under the peculiar circumstances of the country, the tenant must always be at a disadvantage, but by some external and disinterested authority. Their theory led in its completeness to those three demands which subsequently became so prominent, fixity of tenure, freedom of sale of the tenant's interest, and a fair rent fixed by an authoritative Court.

Failure of previous efforts at land reform.

It is not to be supposed that the evils of the Irish land system had escaped full notice in Parliament. When the country was settling down after the terrible crisis of the famine, after the evictions which had followed that crisis had lessened the population, and given an opportunity, of which only too large an advantage had been taken, for consolidating properties, Mr. Napier, the Conservative Attorney-General for Ireland, had in November 1852 produced a Bill, which, had it been carried, would have gone far to secure that compensation for improvements which was the great object of the tenant. The support of Lord Derby's Government carried the Bill through two readings in the Commons, nor did the change of Ministry influence it, and in August 1853 it was read a third time. It was, however, dropped after the second reading in the House of Lords. Again in the following year it passed the Commons, but the feeling in regard to property in the Upper House again proved too strong for it, and after a hostile report from a select committee it was thrown out. The Ministry of Lord Palmerston was unfavourable to any changes with regard to land. Liberal in name, it was essentially a Conservative Ministry, its chief characteristic was its desire to allow things to remain unchanged. It resulted that every attempt made towards legalising the Ulster

custom failed. A Bill for the purpose introduced by Mr. Maguire in 1858 was stigmatised by the Premier as "a Bill to transfer the property of one set of persons to another of a different class;" and in 1860 the Government taking the matter in hand even passed a Bill affirming the principle that arrangements between landlord and tenant should rest entirely on contract, that with regard to past improvements the tenant should have no claim for compensation, while for improvements in the future no compensation could be claimed unless they were undertaken with the landlord's consent.

The disestablishment of the Church had not escaped the fate which constantly attended the tardy concessions of England to Irish claims. Instead of producing order or exciting any feeling of gratitude among the people, it appeared only to encourage further agitation, and to increase the lawless disturbance of the country. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act had been allowed to lapse at the beginning of the year 1869. Several of the more notorious of the Fenian convicts had been amnestied, and had at once proceeded to declare their uncompromising hatred to England, and to inaugurate a fresh agitation. The number of agrarian outrages rapidly increased, and before the year closed it had been found necessary to send additional troops across the Channel. In recommending an alteration in the land law, Mr. Gladstone laid himself open to very obvious comment. His opponents were not only able to stigmatise his conduct as a mean concession to disaffection, they could point out the complete failure of the conciliatory step already taken, and could charge the Government with laxity in the performance of its primary duty, the suppression of open disorder. Nor could Mr. Gladstone deny the existence of increased crime. But while admitting it, and even allowing that his legislation by raising hope had added to the excitement, he took the high ground that the great curative measure he was recommending was in itself just; and that its effects, though they might be slow, must ultimately appear.

As Mr. Gladstone had undertaken to govern Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas, he could hardly accept as the basis for improving the land system much less than the view implied in the Ulster custom. But he was not only bound to legislate as far as possible to suit Irish ideas, he was also bound by his economical views, and by his connection with a party of wealth and standing, to support as fully as possible the rights of

Increased excitement in Ireland. 1869.

The problem Mr. Gladstone had to solve.

property. The problem he felt himself obliged to solve was to harmonise views so antagonistic as those implied by the fixity of tenure which the Irish tenant demanded and those expressed in the English meaning of the word "freehold," and secondly, the Irish conception of a fair rent with the English economical belief in the sanctity of free contract. When the Bill was laid before the public

it became evident that in the attempted compromise the Government had been obliged to incline considerably towards Irish ideas. The measure seemed to allow that in Ireland at least the accepted view of absolute property in land was untenable, and to acknowledge definitely not only this right of an occupier to the improvements he had made, but also to his occupation. The Ulster custom was taken as the basis of legislation with regard to tenancies at will. Where that custom existed it was to receive the force of law; where analogous though less definite customs obtained, they were to be recognised if the tenant was disturbed by his landlord except for non-payment of rent; and, where no such custom existed, compensation for improvement and for disturbance, according to a certain scale, was rendered imperative, and courts were established to settle questions which would certainly arise under the Bill. Thus far it would seem that the measure was a first step towards a system of dual ownership. But upon granting long leases a landlord might free his property from the restrictions which legalised custom laid upon it, and a second part of the measure was directed to the establishment of a proprietary instead of a tenant class. Public loans, to be repaid by instalments spread over a number of years, were to be authorised for the purpose of enabling tenants to purchase their holdings. The necessity of legislating upon the land in Ireland was so generally felt that the Bill was received with general acquiescence, and passed the second reading by a very large majority. Such opposition as it encountered was offered in committee. The point which afforded the great opportunity for a party division was the compensation allowed for disturbance, as distinct from that allowed for improvements. This was as Mr. Disraeli pointed out a real change in the nature of property in land. The scale of compensation, which varied according to the value of the holding from seven to two years' rent, acknowledged the right of the occupier to the actual possession of that proportion at least of his holding. The tenant thus became a joint proprietor with the landlord. Mr. Disraeli's argument was at the time contradicted by the supporters of the Bill, who declared that the compensation was only

The Irish Land Bill introduced. Feb. 16, 1870.

allowed to cover the loss which eviction caused. But his contention that the concession would lead, as dual ownership has constantly done, to increased irritation on the part of the tenant, and to a general refusal to pay rent, proved only too prophetic. The division showed the strength of the Government, which obtained a majority of seventy-four in favour of the enactment of the Bill upon this point. Indeed, although a vast number of amendments were proposed in both Houses, none of them were carried which at all vitally affected the measure, and by the 1st of August it had passed through all its stages. Great and almost revolutionary though it was, it did not produce all the good which was expected of it. The landlords found means to thwart its operation. The purchase clauses became ineffective, because the owners of property preferred to sell even at lower prices to fellow-owners rather than to their tenants. They took advantage also of loopholes which had unfortunately been left, enabling them to contract themselves out of the action of the Bill. Their liberty of action with regard to their tenants was restricted only by a pecuniary fine, which proved insufficient to deter them from pursuing their old course, and as a matter of fact evictions, instead of decreasing, became more numerous under the operation of the new law.

While the Land Bill was still before the House, after its second reading, and before it passed into Committee, it had been thought necessary to introduce and rapidly pass a Bill known as the Peace Preservation Act for the suppression of disorder. The use of firearms was forbidden in proclaimed districts, the powers of the police were considerably increased, magistrates were intrusted with a large summary jurisdiction, and a change of venue in trials was authorised. The Government was also given the power of suppressing newspapers, subject to the necessity of justifying its action if the owners of the paper proceeded against it.

The Peace Preservation Act. April 4.

The defects in the land law were not at first obvious. The satisfaction which it gave to the Irish, in conjunction with the stringent enactments of the Peace Preservation Act, produced a period of comparative quiet. But it was evident that the twofold discontent of the Irish was not satisfied in either of its branches. It was no doubt much to the tenant that he should secure the advantages of his own improvements, but it was the land itself at which he really aimed; and the power of eviction, still left in the hands of the landlord, and even implicitly allowed upon condition of compensation being paid, appeared to

Unsatisfactory results of the new legislation.

leave the tenant's tenure as uncertain as ever. There were in fact plain signs that the new land law did not go nearly far enough to destroy the agrarian agitation, that the religious equality granted by the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and the desire to let bygones be bygones, evidenced by the amnesty afforded to the Fenian prisoners in 1869, were not regarded as an adequate reply to the aspirations of the national party. Armed as they were with the powers of the Peace Preservation Act, the Government were obliged to appeal to Parliament in the very year that the Land Act was passed, for a Committee to examine into the outrages of the Ribbon Society in West Meath. In that neighbourhood all the ordinary phenomena of Irish agrarian discontent were visible, murders and outrages, and the impossibility of obtaining satisfactory verdicts upon the criminals. On the other hand, the defeat of Fenianism, the avowed object of which was separation and independence, afforded opportunity for the rise of a new demand, a sort of ill-defined compromise between actual separation and close union with England, which took the name of Home Rule. The Parliamentary advocacy of this scheme was in the hands of Mr. Isaac Butt, who in successive sessions, with considerable effect, but without any exact definition of what he wanted, pressed its claims upon Parliament. The Fenian leaders, if not active in their support of the movement, which fell no doubt far short of their objects, quietly acquiesced in it. At no time, however, during the leadership of Mr. Butt did the Home Rule movement assume a very threatening aspect, or appear to touch the feelings of the people very closely. It was not until it fell into the firmer hands of Mr. Parnell that it passed out of the sphere of theoretical discussion.

The stream of reform which had been pent up during the long Ministry of Lord Palmerston was now at its full flood. The two great Irish Bills, involving as they did such important questions as the connection between Church and State, and the absolute character of property, had necessarily taken the first place in public interest. But the programme of the Government as laid down in the Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament (Feb. 8, 1870) had included an immense variety of subjects, so many indeed that it was impossible to handle them all.

The Ministry at all events cannot be charged with delay. Only two days after the introduction of the Irish Land Bill, the great question of National Education was brought forward. England had been gradually awakening to a sense of its

Rise of the
Home Rule
movement.

The large
Government
programme.

Educational
reforms.

deficiency in national education, and to the necessity of improving it. It was well ascertained that the country was in this respect far behind many continental nations. The marvellous successes of Prussia were commonly traced to the trained intelligence of the men composing its armies, and it was felt that if England was to maintain its forward position in the world, the education of the people could be no longer left in its present unsatisfactory condition. In Mr. Forster had been found an able and earnest exponent of this feeling, and on him, as Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, devolved the duty of introducing and supporting the great measure by which the Ministry purposed to redeem its promises. This Bill may be regarded as a part of a general scheme involving all classes of education, and portions of which had already been before the public. Already, in 1862, the training places of the wealthy few, the Universities and public schools, had passed into the hands of Commissioners with a view to modification and reform. The movement had been carried further, and had touched the secondary education. There were scattered over England a vast number of grammar-schools and educational foundations intended for the middle classes. There was every reason to believe that the resources thus offered for education were largely wasted and misapplied. In 1865 a Schools Inquiry Commission, of which Mr. Forster was a prominent member, had been issued. The report of this Commission had brought to light abundant abuses. The education offered by the grammar-schools was frequently not at all that which the people in the neighbourhood required. Incompetent or idle masters, content with their fixed stipends, allowed their schools to fall into entire decay. The very requirements of the Founder's Will in many cases formed an obstacle to improvement. The Commissioners not only exposed the abuses, but entered into minute arguments as to the remedies. Mr. Forster introduced a Bill more or less in accordance with these suggestions, and although in its passage through Parliament it lost considerably in completeness, its main principles were preserved. Commissioners were appointed with power to make new schemes; and although in 1874 a reactionary movement was made with the object of reversing the liberal religious principles on which the Commissioners were acting, its practical effect was merely to transfer their power to the already existing body of Charity Commissioners. In their hands new schemes have continued to be created, and many of the flagrant abuses which had disgraced the old foundation schools have been removed. Even before the

Bill for
Secondary
Education.
1869.

appointment of the Endowed Schools Commission, the deficiencies in secondary education had been so obvious that in 1858 the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge had each of them set on foot a system of local examinations, by which the efficiency of secondary schools, whether private or endowed, was tested. By these means both the educational machinery and its employment were largely improved.

Of more general importance was the Bill of 1870 for national elementary education. The small grant which nearly forty years before had been made to support the National and the British and

Elementary
Education Bill.
Feb. 1870.

Foreign School Societies had swelled into an annual sum of £500,000, and the Committee of the Council on Education had grown into an important department of the administration. But voluntary effort, even when subsidised by the State, had failed in its object. Much had no doubt been achieved, but statistics showed only too plainly how far the country still was from possessing an efficient system of public education. It was calculated that in many of the large towns scarcely more than a third of the children received regular teaching. All schemes for a truly national system had hitherto made shipwreck on what was spoken of as the religious difficulty. The various religious denominations could agree upon no general system of undogmatic religious teaching, and the general feeling of the country was strongly opposed to the views of the extreme Liberals, who were eager that education should be divorced from religion, and be entirely secular. The subject had come into prominence in 1869 on the motion of Mr. Melly for a commission of inquiry. The Government had withstood the demand on the ground that sufficient information was already at hand, but had given an implied promise of early legislation. It fell to Mr. Forster to redeem this pledge. His object, as he himself explained, was to cover the country with good schools without the waste of public money. The Bill which was to solve this problem proposed to take advantage of the existing voluntary system, but to supply at the public cost its proved deficiencies. The first thing to be done was to find out what was wanted. For this purpose England was to be divided into districts, and the amount of school accommodation afforded with that required in each compared. After the lapse of a year, during which voluntary effort might be further exerted, the deficiencies were to be supplied by the compulsory erection of schools. In calculating the amount of accommodation offered by any district, only those schools which accepted Government inspection and a very stringent conscience clause were reckoned. Accommodation being

thus supplied, it became a question how it was to be paid for. Mr. Forster, believing that the work of general education would be too great for the Central Government, proposed to place the expense upon a local rate, the administration of which along with the management of the rate-established schools should be in the hands of a School Board, elected by the vestries, or by the Town Councils in municipal boroughs. The School Boards were authorised to make by-laws to compel attendance, and to establish free schools where necessary, as exceptions to the general principle that parents should pay for their children's education. Thus far there was little in the Bill to excite opposition. The machinery suggested, and the compromise by which the systems of voluntary and rate-paid schools were allowed to co-exist, met with very general approval. But the ultimate success of the measure depended upon the solution of the much-vexed religious question. Granting that the voluntary schools were allowed under the condition of a conscience clause to continue dogmatic teaching, what was to be done in those schools which were to be supported by general rates? Long discussion and much popular agitation had to be got through before an answer was arrived at. The programme of the Birmingham Education League demanded that education should be free, compulsory, and secular. On the two first points there was no strong popular feeling in its favour. It did not seem unreasonable that parents should be called upon to assist in educating their children. The power of permissive compulsion intrusted to the School Boards was as much as the country was inclined to bear. But many of the leaders of the dissenting bodies, jealous and afraid of the influence of the Church, were decidedly in favour of the complete separation of religious and secular instruction. Mr. Forster was, however, firm upon the point. After a period of watchful observation of the course of public feeling, he declared himself convinced that, as a whole, the people of England were strongly opposed to the entire omission of religion in education, and too warmly attached to the Bible to allow its use to be dropped. He therefore accepted an amendment, brought forward in Committee by Mr. Cowper Temple, preventing the use of any Catechism or dogmatic formulary in the rate-established schools. Beyond that, he declared, the Government would not go, and finally it was agreed that unless religious instruction was forbidden by the School Board of the district, the teachers might read and expound the Bible, avoiding the use of Catechisms or written creeds.

The Bill, as completed, thus provided school accommodation for
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all the children in England, at schools subject to careful Government inspection. It maintained the existing voluntary schools, and allowed them, subject to a stringent conscience clause, to give denominational religious teaching. It provided undenominational religious teaching in the Board Schools, subject to the permission of the Board, but laid no constraint upon the children to attend it. It continued the payment of fees, subsidised by Government grants, in the case of all schools whether supported by voluntary subscriptions or by rates. It gave to locally elected School Boards the administration of the rate-paid schools, and the power of compelling the attendance of children at some certificated school. The method of electing the School Boards was much discussed. The original proposition was modified by the introduction, for the first time in public elections, of the vote by ballot; and it was arranged that London should be formed into a single district, in which all ratepayers should have votes. Mr. Forster exhibited in his management of the Bill an unwearied assiduity, an ability, and an earnestness, which excited universal admiration. It proved, on the whole, a very great success. No doubt it did not succeed in giving England a perfect system of elementary education, and, in the advance of liberal thought, several of the views put forward at the time with little hope of result have found a large number of supporters; the desire for free compulsory education has become very generally diffused. The somewhat inelastic and mechanical character of the training given, the result of centralisation, is a subject of not unreasonable complaint, and the large expenditure incurred by the School Boards, especially in London, has brought them some unpopularity. But upon the whole, whatever its defects, there can be no doubt that by placing the opportunity of schooling within the reach of all, by exerting pressure upon parents and placing before them the duty of training their children, and by insuring at least a fair amount of efficiency to the training given, the Bill has exerted a very great and beneficial influence.

The principle that education should be national and unsectarian, which was accepted in this series of measures, reached its final extension when at length in 1871 the long-vexed question of religious tests at the Universities was settled. Thrown out by the House of Lords in 1870, it was reintroduced in the same terms by Mr. Gladstone in the following year, and in spite of the opposition of Lord Salisbury, who succeeded in carrying by a small majority in the Upper House a new test to be laid on all

Results of
Mr. Forster's
Bill.

Abolition of
religious tests
in the Univer-
sities. 1871.

holding college offices, the Bill was carried in the Lower House and ultimately accepted by the Lords. By this Bill, while clerical fellowships were still continued, all lay students were admitted to the Universities on precisely equal terms.

The three great measures which had marked the first years of Mr. Gladstone's Government had been upon the whole recognised as necessary, and had secured large majorities in the House, though, like all other reforms, they had excited much hostility among the interests which they had unavoidably attacked. The interests of the Church and of landed property had been, it was supposed, assaulted by the two great Irish measures, while the Nonconformists viewed with much dislike the religious compromise of the Education Act. But the reforming energy of the Government was by no means exhausted. In rapid succession Bills were produced which, however desirable in themselves, immediately excited strong opposition, and required for their success a combination of firmness, with delicacy of handling, which they did not receive. At the same time the management of foreign affairs, of necessity difficult in the presence of the great war raging in Europe, assumed a form which to many appeared derogatory to the high position of England. Though the Ministry was able to hold its position for some years longer, as early as the beginning of 1871 the full tide of its popularity had begun to ebb.

With public attention fixed upon the astounding events of the war in France, and Paris in the agonies of the winter siege by the German armies, it is not strange that the military condition of England should have become a prominent topic of discussion. A very natural though somewhat unreasonable sympathy for France went hand in hand with an exaggerated dread of the power and ambition of its successful rival. The self-command and moderation, which is Bismarck's greatest claim to our admiration, was not yet known. To not a few it seemed only too probable that the conquest of France was but a stepping-stone to an assault on England. A serious doubt was felt, not without justification in the faulty system of our military administration, as to the efficiency of our means of defence. An agitation for army reform, supported by the press and by several well-known public men, arose, and was taken up by the Ministry. The duty of throwing into shape the general feeling in this respect fell to Mr. Cardwell. The first notification of what was intended was given when the army estimates for the year 1871 were moved. The Government demanded £15,851,700,

Unpopularity
of Government.
1871.

Agitation for
reforms in the
army.

or an increase of very nearly £3,000,000 upon the sum demanded the preceding year. It was explained that the army would be increased by 20,000 men, that a considerable addition would be made to the number of the field guns, and the grant to volunteers largely raised, but that of the whole sum about one-third would be given towards the increase of artillery and ammunition, and of the transport service. On demanding so large an addition to the estimates, it was necessary for Mr. Cardwell to explain at some length the scheme of army reorganisation, for which the grant was required. The result of his plan would, as he estimated, give England an army of 497,000 men: 135,000 regulars, 139,000 militia, 14,000 yeomanry, 9000 first army reserve, 30,000 second army reserve, and 170,000 volunteers. But in order to carry out the changes in contemplation it was necessary to settle some preliminary principles, such as the need of a sufficient army, the method of enlistment, and the relation of the auxiliary to the regular forces. It was argued that the character of the English Empire differs from that of any foreign country; its wide extension, and the consequent recurrence of small wars renders the presence of its army, though not in great numbers, necessary in all parts of the world. It did not therefore appear desirable that the universal and compulsory service which filled the successful armies of Germany should be adopted; a regular body of paid troops always in a state of complete efficiency would supply the wants of England at once more cheaply and more efficaciously. On this ground alone, even without the additional arguments drawn from the great distaste of Englishmen for compulsory service and its undoubted and expensive interference with the ordinary business of life, the Government recommended with general approbation that the principle of voluntary enlistment should be maintained. But the regular army, being in a great degree used abroad, was insufficient for purposes of defence; it was backed up by the auxiliary forces—the militia and the volunteers. The national force, as it may be called, the militia, the original army of England, was still under the authority of the Lords Lieutenant of the counties. But no complete and general organisation could be arrived at, nor any system by which the two branches of the service could be brought into close relation, unless this divided command was destroyed, and the Commander-in-Chief and the War Office recognised as the sole paramount authority. That all the forces should be brought under one uniform system and placed under one command, was therefore a second point pressed by the Government and willingly accepted. But even so, any real amalgamation

The Army
Regulation Bill
introduced.
Feb. 1871.

remained impossible as long as commissions in the regular army were a matter of purchase, and in the militia a matter of gift. Many other reasons seemed to point to the wisdom of the abolition of the purchase system. It had become fully recognised by all civilians that the excellence of an army depended chiefly on the excellence of its officers, and that no process except that of selection could prevent old and inefficient officers from holding high command. The growing feeling in favour of merit without regard to wealth, which was one of the best points in the democratic growth of the time, was shocked at the idea of meritorious soldiers of good capacity left in subordinate posts, and superseded, irrespective of their capacity, by rich men. Of this feeling Mr. George Trevelyan had made himself the spokesman, and again and again had excited popular indignation by narrating such cases as that of Havelock, who had declared that "three sots and two fools had purchased over him, and that but for his family he would not have served another hour." It was plain to all men not themselves interested in the matter, that although England might be proud of its officers, and although it had on the whole avoided disaster, theoretically the system was absolutely untenable. To the reforming Government of the day it was a matter of prime necessity even irrespective of the army scheme that purchase should be abolished. To that scheme its abolition was the necessary threshold. Mr. Cardwell therefore suggested that on a certain day purchase should cease, but that vested interests should be carefully guarded; commissioners were to be appointed to represent the purchaser and pay to those officers who withdrew from the army the full price of their commission, not only the legal regulation price, but the extra price which though itself illegal had been sanctioned by custom.

In the agitation which had preceded the Bill the expense thus necessarily incurred, which Mr. Cardwell put at about £7,000,000, had been carefully explained to the nation, and it appeared clear that it was willing to pay the price. But the destruction of purchase was regarded with the greatest hostility by the greater part of the army, and by Conservatives who desired to maintain what they considered the high social standard of the officers and the due influence of wealth. The existing system had also been regarded favourably by many eminent authorities, and opinions in its favour expressed by such men as Wellington and Raglan carried considerable weight. The stand made by the military men and their supporters was of so obstructive a nature, and threatened so entirely

Opposition to
the Army Bill.

to preclude legislation upon other subjects, that the Government at length felt themselves compelled to remodel their Bill, and to confine it to the abolition of purchase and the transfer of the power over the militia and volunteers from the Lords-Lieutenant to the Crown. A very clear hint that further opposition would be followed by the refusal of the Government to pay more than the regulation prices by way of compensation had its effect upon the opponents of the Bill, and in its curtailed form it was passed without much further difficulty (July 3, 1871). The Bill had still to pass the House of Lords, and was there met by a Conservative amendment moved by the Duke of Richmond, to the effect that the House should not pass the second reading of the Bill until it had the full plan of reorganisation before it. The speech of Lord Northbrook in introducing the Bill to the Upper House had in fact given all the information that was necessary, especially as the reorganisation, as apart from certain large principles and financial questions, was distinctly the business of the executive and not of the legislature. The amendment however had an air of plausibility about it, and at the same time relieved the Lords from undertaking what they felt to be an impossibility, the direct rejection of the abolition of purchase. On the division there appeared a majority of twenty-five in favour of the amendment. It was thought that this was tantamount to the rejection of the Bill, though technically it was but its postponement. It was evident that a quarrel between the two Houses was threatening. But the public were taken a good deal by surprise when two days after the passing of the amendment in the Lords Mr. Gladstone announced in the Lower House that purchase had already been abolished. Pointing out that the Commons had assented to the principle, and were willing it must

Abolition of
purchase by
royal warrant.
July 1871.

be supposed to pay the price, he had thought it right, he said, to advise her Majesty to destroy by royal warrant a system which existed only by royal warrant, and to declare that by the 1st of November purchase should cease. A similar announcement was made in the Lords. The excitement in Parliament was considerable. Mr. Disraeli denounced the conduct of the Ministry as "a part of a shameful conspiracy against the undoubted privileges of the Upper House." The House of Lords, after bitter speeches against the supposed infringement of the Constitution, passed a vote of censure upon the Ministry, at the same time assenting to the second reading of the Bill in order to secure to the officers the compensation due to them on the abolition of purchase. There was a good deal of question among thinking men of both

parties both as to the legality and the wisdom of the Government policy. By the people at large it was accepted, without complaint of the method employed, with approval of the object gained.

The organisation of the army thus became the duty of the Government of the day; and in the following year, on moving the estimates, Mr. Cardwell explained in detail the scheme he intended to adopt. The German organisation which had produced such great results was necessarily taken as the groundwork of the arrangement, but so modified as to suit the peculiar requirements of the English army. The objects which Mr. Cardwell set before him were the localisation of the regiments, the establishment of an ^{Reorganisation of the Army 1872.} army sufficient at once for foreign service and for home defence, and a ready means for raising both the home and foreign regiments on any emergency to their full strength. The country was divided into districts, in each of which a central depot was established, where the home battalions of the local regiments were stationed, with which during their period of service the militia regiments of the districts were brigaded. The volunteers were likewise brought under the same general system. To remove the evils which had attended the system of long service, and to pass a greater number of men through regular training, a short service was introduced. Recruits were to enlist for twelve years; for seven of these they were to serve with the colours and then pass for the remaining five into the army reserve, still liable to be called out for foreign service. Each regiment of the line being divided into two battalions, while one remained at home the other was employed on foreign service, the intention being that at least one-half of each arm of the service should be constantly at home. Along with this arrangement went a considerable amount of decentralisation, each military centre being in many respects complete in itself. But unity was given to the whole by a new arrangement of departments. The Secretary of State for War was responsible for the whole working of the machine. The three branches, presided over respectively by the Commander-in-Chief, the Surveyor-General of Ordnance, and the Financial Secretary, were brought together at the War Office. The Commander-in-Chief was given the command of all the land forces of the Crown whether at home or abroad. The Quartermaster-General, hitherto a rival and co-ordinate power, was subordinated to the Adjutant-General, who became practically what is known as Chief of the Staff. Considerable complaints were made as to several points in the scheme; short service was held to deprive the army of its chief element of steadiness—the presence of veteran soldiers; the *esprit de*

corps which forms so large a factor in the efficiency of a regiment was thought to be weakened by the change of name which the regiments underwent and by the destruction of the privileges and peculiarities of various corps, which was a necessary consequence of the scheme of reorganisation; while as a matter of fact the frequent demands of foreign service have prevented that balance between the home and foreign regiments which was essential to the completeness of the scheme. But there can be little question that taken as a whole,—including as it did a considerable amount of decentralisation, the establishment of better arrangements for commissariat and transport, higher requirements for obtaining commissions, and a general unity of system,—the scheme was a great and valuable one.

One other reforming attempt, meeting with much the same reception as the Army Bill, occupied the attention of Parliament in 1871, and was not completed till the following year. This was Mr. Forster's Ballot Bill. Its object was to render secret voting necessary both in municipal and parliamentary elections, and generally to secure the purity of elections. Though introduced early in the session, its discussion was long postponed by the debates upon purchase. Mr. Gladstone, who had previously opposed the principle, now became its most ardent supporter. The feeling in the House was however not strong in its favour, the Opposition pursued the same course of obstruction as had delayed the Purchase Bill, and though the Government and its supporters adopted the very unusual policy of allowing its opponents to speak unanswered, it was very late in the session before

Failure of the
Ballot,
Licensing,
and Local
Government
Bills. 1871.

the Bill could be got through the House. Full of anger against the Ministry, and not observing any great or general feeling in favour of the Bill, the House of Lords threw it out by a very large majority. The year was indeed one of legislative failures. Mr. Bruce had vainly endeavoured to advance the cause of temperance by a Licensing Bill; the interest of the licensed victuallers was too strong for him, and it had been withdrawn. A Bill introduced by Mr. Goschen for the reform of local government and taxation met the same fate. In fact of more than one hundred Ministerial Bills the Universities' Test Bill was alone passed.

Nor was the financial scheme of the Government more successful. Although the receipts of the last year had largely exceeded the estimates, Mr. Lowe, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, reckoned that, on account of the outlay rendered necessary by the abolition of purchase and the other improvements in the army, there would be a

deficit for the coming year of more than £2,000,000. This he proposed to meet by alterations in the probate and succession duties, by an increased income-tax raised on a system of percentages and amounting to 10s. 8d. per cent., and by a tax upon matches. On this latter point he explained the immense waste and the immense consumption, and calculated that a duty of a halfpenny on a hundred would produce a very large sum. He proposed that the tax should be collected by means of stamps attached to each box, and suggested the punning motto, "*Ex luce lucellum.*" No one of his propositions met with approval. The match manufacturers of the East End feeling that the match-tax would fall chiefly upon them, made a violent opposition to it, and the very poor class employed in the manufacture expressed their disapprobation by crowded processions to Westminster; the wealthy classes regarded the alteration of the succession duties as an assault upon property; while the collection of the income-tax upon percentage instead of by a definite sum per pound excited general suspicion. It was found necessary to withdraw the whole Budget, and to substitute for all the various methods of Mr. Lowe a simple addition of 2d. in the pound to the income-tax.

Matchbox-tax
thrown out.
1871.

This year of failures had so loosened the hold of the Government upon the people that it was not without serious marks of disapprobation that the Prime Minister presented himself in the autumn to his constituents at Greenwich. The speech he then delivered was a remarkable effort, and secured for the moment a complete triumph. He was obliged to confess that nothing had been done except the abolition of purchase, but upon this he laid great stress, excusing the want of success in other directions upon the ground that it was in accordance with the English custom to think long before adopting changes, and asserting the necessity of the ultimate success of the rejected Bills. He at the same time drew attention in eloquent words to the deeper social movements which underlay the surface of politics, the growing desire for restrictions on intemperance, the necessity of sharing between the rich and the poor the increasing wealth of the country, and of raising the appreciation of honest labour.

Gladstone's
Greenwich
speech.

Yet, although the year 1872 somewhat redressed the disasters of the preceding year and the Government was enabled to pass several important measures, it had received a blow from which it never properly recovered. Its very successes in some respects tended to increase the disfavour with which it was regarded. The Ballot Bill

was indeed carried in the face of much opposition, and after a compromise with the House of Lords; but many even among the Liberals regarded secret voting with dislike as contrary to the principles of the Constitution, and as a further step towards annihilating the influence of wealth and education. The abortive Licensing Bill of the preceding year was reproduced in a moderate form, and was successfully carried through the House. It contained provisions against adulteration, organised the licensing bodies both in counties and boroughs, leaving the power of licensing in the hands of the magistrates, and fixed the hours during which public-houses could be open; eleven o'clock in the country and twelve o'clock in London was the hour appointed for closing. But the Bill though not otherwise than moderate excited the anger of the licensed victuallers, and aroused the feelings of many of the lower classes, who disliked the restrictions laid upon their habits, and clamoured vehemently against the advantages accorded to the wealthier classes by the exception of clubs and hotels from the action of the new law. By many also the attempt to enforce virtue by legislation was regarded as a step in the wrong direction. The Budget, though simple and easy, did little towards restoring the *prestige* of the Ministry. The receipts so far exceeded the estimated expenditure that a surplus of more than £3,000,000 resulted, but Mr. Lowe contented himself with half, thus undoing what he had done the preceding year—*withdrawing 2d. from the income-tax, and lessening the duty upon coffee by one-half.* But the very existence of the large surplus, and the simplicity with which it was handled, seemed a confession that previous estimates had been erroneous, and the contemplated changes proposed in the previous year ill-judged.

It was not however the legislation of the Ministry alone which had shaken their popularity. No doubt there was a general feeling that they were guided by a vexatious eagerness for uncalled-for reforms and guilty of want of tact in carrying them out. But still more dangerous to them was the growing opinion that they were inclined to tamper in their management of foreign affairs with the honour of the country. The Franco-German war, the Black Sea Conference, the Treaty of Washington, each in turn afforded ground for charges of the kind.

The outbreak of the war in the middle of 1870 had been somewhat of a surprise to Europe. There was every appearance of peace, when among the candidates for the vacant throne of Spain there appeared a Prince of the Hohenzollern House, and it

Popularity of Government decreased by passage of the Ballot and Licensing Bills. 1872.

Discontent with the management of the Foreign Office.

Origin of the Franco-German War.

at once became apparent that the signs of peace were fallacious. The misgovernment of the Queen of Spain had led in 1868 to a revolution which drove the Bourbons from the throne, and since that time Serano, acting as Regent, and Marshal Prim as Commander-in-Chief and Minister, had carried on a provisional government with the avowed intention of ultimately re-establishing the government of the country upon a constitutional basis. The difficulty was to find a sovereign at once acceptable to the people of Spain and to the Powers of Europe. Many candidates had been proposed; among them the most prominent was the Duke of Montpensier, the son of Louis Philippe. But as a vote of two-thirds of the Cortes was necessary to secure the acceptance of any candidate, and none of them had as yet gained sufficient popularity to allow of the hope of such a result being obtained in their favour, General Prim looked elsewhere for a candidate. He had found a man whom he believed answered his requirements in Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern Sigmaringen, who was indeed distantly connected with the Prussian House, but far more nearly with the supporters of the Napoleonic tradition, for one of his grandmothers was a Murat, and the other a Beauharnais.

There was no reason to suppose that such a candidate would be distasteful to the French Emperor. But events had occurred in France which induced Napoleon to desire a foreign war. Opposition to his personal rule had increased to such an extent that he had found it necessary in 1869 to promulgate changes in the constitution, giving it a greater appearance of liberty, and to place the Government in the hands of Ollivier, one of the leaders of the constitutional party. The general election which followed, in spite of the large use of government influence, had resulted, especially in the towns, in the choice of representatives opposed to personal power. But though compelled to adopt the forms of constitutionalism, Napoleon had no intention of surrendering the position he had so long enjoyed. He found as he believed the means of obtaining a renewed lease of power in the application to existing circumstances of the principle which he had always maintained. He called to his aid universal suffrage, and insisted upon superseding the legislative body, and submitting the constitution to the verdict of a plebiscite. He obtained a large majority in his favour, but there was an ominous diminution in the numbers of his partisans as compared with those who had voted for him in 1863; in the large cities his cause was in a minority, and even among the

Candidate for the throne of Spain.

Napoleon's desire for war.

soldiery his diminishing popularity was evident. He would seem to have been desirous to mark his renewed acquisition of power by some striking exploit, which should at once hush amid the enthusiasm of a national war the voices of his opponents and restore by the glories of victory the shaken allegiance of the army. He saw in the jealousy of Prussian aggrandisement which since the events of 1866 had been prevalent in France a ready instrument for his purpose. His diplomatic agents by their mistaken information misled him so completely that he supposed Austria and the South of Germany would hail him as a friend, while those in charge of the military administration at home, with equal want of honesty and of knowledge, persuaded him that his army was in the highest state of preparation. Advantage therefore was at once taken of the Hohenzollern candidature to raise a cry against the ambitious views of Prussia. Not satisfied, it was said, with its triumphs at home and its interference in the East, it was bent on establishing its influence in Spain, at the very threshold of France. The French Ambassador was instructed to protest against this conduct, and to demand a voluntary withdrawal of Prince Leopold. The demand was granted, and Ollivier was satisfied with his diplomatic triumph. Not so Napoleon and his more immediate friends in the cabinet. Gramont, the foreign Minister, was authorised to utter in the Legislative Chamber words which could mean little less than war. The Emperor and his Bonapartist Ministers insisted upon a written disclaimer from King William, and a promise that the candidature should not be renewed. Pressing himself upon the King with these arrogant demands, Benedetti, the French Ambassador, met with a somewhat rough reception. Bismarck, who desired war, but understood that to carry Germany with him the first blow must come from France, took advantage of the incident; an incomplete report of the supposed insult roused a storm of anger which no Minister could oppose, and France almost immediately declared war.

It was intended no doubt that this sudden act should be followed by an equally sudden exertion of military force. Napoleon Beginning of the war. intended to push at once between Prussia and the Southern States of Germany, which he expected to find friendly to his interests. But when it came to the point the army on which he relied proved in no condition for immediate movement. Delay was necessary, and delay enabled the Prussians to bring their admirable organisation at once into play, to secure the friendship of their southern fellow-countrymen, and to change the defensive war with which they were threatened into one of active offence. The French

Emperor, who had himself taken the command of his army, did indeed strike the first blow by an idle bombardment of the open town of Saarbrück, but the movement was without result. The real warfare began when the army of the Crown Prince surprised a portion of Marshal MacMahon's army at Wissemburg, and two days afterwards, on the 6th of August, completely defeated the Marshal himself at Wörth. The battle was the result of a combined advance of the Prussians, and on the same day, in the neighbourhood of Saarbrück, upon the heights of Spicheren, the armies of Steinmetz and Prince Frederick Charles won an equally decisive victory over the French. MacMahon's army in Alsace was virtually destroyed at Wissemburg, and was compelled to find its way back as best it could to Châlons, where the army of reserve was stationed. The armies of Lorraine, with which the Emperor himself was, withdrew into the valley of the Moselle, resting upon the great fortress of Metz. Into the gap thus formed the Prussians at once pushed. Coming both from the north and the south they thrust themselves between Metz and Châlons, and succeeded after a series of murderous engagements in inclosing the French with Bazaine at their head in Metz. The Emperor with difficulty made his way to Châlons, but in fact his power had left him. The disastrous news of the first defeats had produced a wild excitement in Paris, and the demand for his deposition was loudly raised. The Empress made a gallant effort to uphold the cause of her husband and child, assumed the post of Regent, appointed a new Ministry of a more thoroughly Napoleonic character under General Montauban, and set energetically to work to put Paris in a state of defence. But the course of the war soon scattered to the winds the efforts of the Empress. While Bazaine, to whom the chief command had been intrusted, allowed himself to be shut up in Metz by the northern and central armies of the Prussians, MacMahon, withdrawing by a circuitous route before the advancing forces of the Crown Prince, reached Châlons in safety. To release Bazaine's army, which included almost the whole of the organised force of France, seemed a matter of prime necessity. Setting out from Châlons with 180,000 men, MacMahon and the Emperor marched in a north-easterly direction, with a view of reaching the valley of the Meuse, and forcing their way down it. The Crown Prince followed the movement; so strong were the armies around Metz that it was found possible to despatch a body of 80,000 to his assistance. Thus with more than 200,000 men at command, and aided by the slow and badly organised march of the French, he forestalled MacMahon's action, placed himself between the

French army and Metz, cut its communications with Châlons, and forced it to take refuge in Sedan. There on the last day of August and 1st of September the crowning battle of the campaign was fought, and the Emperor was compelled to surrender with his whole army.

The news of this catastrophe was fatal to the dynasty of Napoleon.

Deposition of
Napoleon.
Sept. 4, 1870.

At a midnight meeting of the legislative body the formal deposition of the Emperor was demanded, but when after a short adjournment it again met to discuss the question, it was evident that the power had passed into other hands. The populace broke into the Assembly, and headed by Gambetta and the chief members of the Opposition, proceeded to the Hôtel de Ville. There a provisional government, subsequently known as the Government of National Defence, was declared. With Trochu as its President, Jules Favre as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Gambetta Minister of the Interior, it began its work by suppressing the Legislative Body and the Senate, and allowing the Republic to be proclaimed at the chief provincial cities of France. It was hoped by onlookers that the fall of Napoleon, to whom the war was due, and the completeness of the vengeance which the Prussians had inflicted upon their assailant, might lead to an honourable peace. The hope was dispelled by the utterances of Jules Favre and a counter declaration of Bismarck. As the mouthpiece of the new Government, the Minister of Foreign Affairs declared that it undertook as its first duty to clear France from the invaders, and would listen to no terms of peace implying the abandonment of one inch of territory or one stone of a French fortress. In reply the Prussian Minister explained clearly that Germany, after the terrible efforts to which it had been driven by French aggression, could not be satisfied without a strong defensive frontier including the possession of Strasburg and Metz.

Thus the second act of the drama of the great war began. The Crown Prince resumed his march upon Paris from which his movement towards Sedan had drawn him. On the 20th the Prussian King had reached Ferrières, the remnants of the French armies were defeated before the city, and Paris was completely invested. In the absence of any constitutionally established Government recognised by the whole of France great difficulties arose in the way of negotiations, and it seemed not unnatural that some cessation of hostilities to allow of elections and reorganisation should be granted by the Prussians even in their own interest. A conference between Bismarck and Jules Favre was arranged through the instrumentality of the English Ambassador; but as the

Siege of
Paris.

one demanded the cession of Strasburg and several other fortresses as a preliminary condition, and the other was pledged for the time to resist all such concessions, the negotiations came to nothing. The only hope of moderating the war seemed to lie in the intervention of the neutral powers; and Thiers, the foremost of French statesmen, set out on a voluntary mission to the capitals of Europe for the purpose of obtaining it. Meanwhile the march of the Crown Prince to Sedan had given the Parisians time to organise their defence; the forts had been armed and strengthened, 400,000 national guards and mobiles organised, marines brought to work the guns, and vast quantities of ammunition made. But the Prussian generals placed their hopes upon famine and political difficulties within the city, and shrank from active measures of assault. To maintain the vast blockade taxed all their powers. Though they had 650,000 men in France, two-thirds of these were employed elsewhere. Bazaine, with his army, had still to be kept shut up in Metz, the communications with Germany had to be guarded, and at first Strasburg and several other important fortresses still held out. It seemed not impossible if the unconquered part of France could be roused to energy that the capital might yet be saved. The duty of making the attempt was undertaken by Gambetta. Escaping early in October from the besieged city in a balloon, he made his appearance at Tours, at once assumed the Ministry of War with almost dictatorial powers, and proceeded to infuse into the provinces something of his own feverish enthusiasm. Armies sprang into existence in all directions; a great force under General D'Aurelle de Paladines was gradually collected behind the Loire; Garibaldi, who had offered his services to the new Republic, took command of a mixed and irregular force in the south-east, while a third active army was established under Count Kératry in the west. But before Gambetta was able to bring any trustworthy troops into action against the Prussian lines, an event occurred which changed the aspect of affairs and proved fatal to the fortunes of France. On the 27th of October Marshal Bazaine surrendered Metz, and with it the whole of his army. Three Marshals of France, 180,000 soldiers, 3000 guns, and 40,000,000 of francs fell into the hands of the conquerors. Either wilfully to suit his own views, as his enemies assert, or from incapacity, the General had allowed this vast force resting on a first-rate fortress to be inclosed by an army hardly larger than itself. Several ill-managed and costly sorties had been made, on more than one occasion with considerable success, but they had never been pressed home;

Gambetta's
attempt to
rouse France.

never to all appearance had any serious effort been made to break a way through the Prussian lines. The mere existence of the army there had however drawn away from offensive action a full third of the Prussian forces; its surrender now set them free to secure the predominance of the besiegers of Paris, and to push on to the further subjugation of the country. Gambetta's forces must henceforward expect to be themselves attacked. The news of the fall of Metz produced a fresh revolutionary outbreak in Paris; the members of the Government were for some time in the hands of the mob. The vigour of Ernest Picard, who had escaped capture and was well supported by General Trochu, suppressed the insurrection. A plebiscite confirmed by a large majority the authority of the existing Government, and the defence was actively pushed on.

At the very moment of the insurrection, Thiers returned from his mission. He had been unable to procure any active intervention from the neutrals, but had received advice and sympathy, and entered at once into negotiations with Bismarck to produce an armistice. But again the negotiations failed. Though the Germans were willing to grant a cessation of arms and to allow the election of a National Assembly, they refused to listen to the suggestion that Paris should be revictualled. It was indeed scarcely to be expected that they should thus surrender the great advantage their lengthened blockade had secured them, and as Thiers made this a necessary condition of the arrangement, his efforts, like those of Jules Favre, proved abortive. The armistice was scarcely refused when for one moment it appeared as though the French might win by arms what they could not secure by negotiation. Before the troops from Metz could enter upon their aggressive movement, General d'Aurelle had set the army of the Loire in motion, and had won over Von der Tann at Coulmiers the only real victory obtained by the French during the war. Moltke recognised the danger. He even for the moment seems to have thought that a withdrawal from Paris might be necessary. But the troops which he hurriedly despatched to Von der Tann's assistance proved sufficient to re-establish the Prussian supremacy in that direction; the French were beaten at Artenay and again at Orleans, and forced to retreat in two directions, thus breaking in half the army of the Loire. The failure was attributed to want of skill in the General. Threatened with a court-martial, he threw up his commission; the southern army of the Loire was placed in the hands of Bourbaki, while General Chanzy with the remainder withdrew towards Le Mans. There seemed but little

Failure of
Thiers'
negotiations.

chance that Paris would be relieved from outside. Faidherbe was indeed making some way in Picardy, Garibaldi and those with him were occupying General Werder in the south and east, but in all directions it appeared clear that the German troops in the field were able to restrain the forces opposed to them from any dangerous approach to the great siege. Meanwhile Paris was not idle. The news of the victory of Coulmiers produced, while the subsequent disasters of d'Aurelle were yet unknown, an important and threatening sortie under General Ducrot which for a while seemed to promise to be successful. For two days the fighting was kept up. But on the 3d of December the French General withdrew, compelled so to act in part by the cold, against which his troops were improperly provided. A second great effort under General Vinoy was made upon the 21st of December, but again owing to some mismanagement of the commanders it proved unsuccessful. The coming winter, the extension of the war, the threatening activity of the besieged, drove the Germans to have recourse to more active measures. While a new levy of 200,000 men was demanded from Germany, the bombardment of Paris at length began, and on the 29th of December one of the forts was taken.

It was the beginning of the end. Whatever was to be done to save Paris either from within or from without must be done quickly. Help might come from Faidherbe in the north, from Chanzy in the west, from Bourbaki in the south, and against the large armies which these Generals had at their command the Prussians had very inferior numbers to oppose. But the raw levies of France proved unable to perform the task set them, while the genius of Moltke, divining always the point of danger and strengthening it, seemed to neutralise their numerical superiority. Faidherbe, who had obtained a transient success at Bapaume, was shortly afterwards completely defeated near St. Quentin, whither a Prussian corps had been hastily despatched by rail from Paris. The hopes of Chanzy lay in the power of Bourbaki to keep the Germans employed upon the Loire. But Bourbaki was engaged on a great enterprise, and had moved away eastward. At once divining his intention the Prussian commander entirely neglected him and sent all his troops against Chanzy, who, gallantly disputing every inch of ground, was finally defeated at Le Mans. The fate of Bourbaki was still more disastrous. Thinking to throw himself upon the German communications in Alsace, he had moved rapidly eastward and attempted to separate the German forces at Vesoul and Belfort: he

Defeat of
Faidherbe,
Chanzy, and
Bourbaki.

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failed. The enemy concentrated in the neighbourhood of Héricourt, and there after a three days' battle Bourbaki suffered a complete defeat. He attempted to retreat, but found himself entrapped by the skill of Moltke, who had not shrunk from withdrawing an army from the north and hurrying it southward. Arriving too late for the battle of Héricourt, it was in time to cut off Bourbaki's retreat, and to drive the whole of his forces into Switzerland, where in accordance with the law of neutrals they laid down their arms.

These successive defeats all took place between the 12th and the 19th of January. On the last of those days the final effort of the Parisians themselves was made. Under the command of Trochu himself 100,000 men pushed out towards St. Cloud and St. Denis. Successful for a while, they were finally beaten back as the German reserves were concentrated on the threatened point. The inevitable consequence of this failure was a riot. Though it was suppressed without difficulty Trochu surrendered the command; and it was evident that at length the forces on which the Germans had relied had done their work—that famine and sedition rendered further defence impossible. On the 23d of January negotiations began. On the evening of the 28th an armistice was signed, and Paris surrendered. Food had been long collected by the Germans in expectation of the surrender, and England was ready to despatch with the greatest speed provisions for the suffering people. Upon the advance of the Germans towards Tours, Gambetta had gone to Bordeaux. He at once indignantly repudiated the armistice. But the other members of the Government of national defence proved too strong for him; recognising that he was after all but a delegate of that Government, he thought it necessary to give in his resignation. Then began an attempt to reorganise in France a Government so national and with such promise of permanence as to be capable of changing the armistice into a peace. A National Assembly was accordingly opened at Bordeaux on the 3d of February, with Grévy as its President, while Thiers was put at the head of the Ministry. Listening to his advice the Assembly proceeded to take measures for relieving the country of the invaders. A Commission was despatched to Paris, and preliminaries of peace were arranged, including a convention allowing of the formal occupation of Paris for a few hours by 30,000 German troops. The terms of peace, though undoubtedly hard—including as they did the cession of Alsace and a considerable portion of Lorraine, and the payment of an enormous war indemnity,—were accepted by the Assembly. On the 2d of March, peace

*Surrender of
Paris.
Jan. 28, 1871.*

*Terms of peace.
March 2, 1871.*

was ratified. The brief occupation of the Champs Elysées by the German troops passed off quietly, and the invasion was at an end.

But France was not yet free from its difficulties. The capitulation had roused the angry temper of the population of Paris. An opportunity was afforded in the widespread discontent for the active movement of the extreme Radical party, which had already made itself felt during the siege, and had lately been well organised under a central committee. Arms had been left in the hands of the National Guard, and under the pretence of guarding the cannon, they had drawn them into the revolutionary quarters of Paris. The number of the regular troops was small, nor were they wholly free from sympathy with the National Guard and popular party. An attempt to withdraw the artillery failed. Many of the troops refused to oppose the insurgents. The Central Committee established itself at the Hôtel de Ville, the members of the Government and General Vinoy with the faithful troops withdrew, an election for the Municipality was held, and the Commune entering into office in the Hôtel de Ville became the sole recognised authority in the city. In view of the disturbances in the capital the Assembly had decided to hold its sittings in Versailles, and thither the troops on leaving Paris withdrew. The men who had appropriated the government of the capital had definite political views. They desired that France should be dissolved into a confederation of Communes, to each of which the fullest measure of self-government should be given, the unity of the country being secured and represented by an Assembly of Delegates from the Federal Communes. With views so absolutely opposed to those of the reactionary Assembly, and so closely affecting the interests of all the privileged classes, in armed rebellion against the constituted authorities of the country, and with their cause already sullied by the needless murder of General Thomas and the slaughter in the Place Vendôme of more than thirty unarmed men who had been there attending a demonstration in favour of order, the men of the Commune could expect no mercy at the hands of the Versailles Government. A regular war sprang up between the rival authorities, and Paris again underwent at the hands of Frenchmen a second and more disastrous bombardment than that from which it had just escaped. Allowed by the Germans to increase the number of regular troops, and easily drawing to himself the late soldiers of the Empire as they returned from captivity, Thiers was able to bring an overwhelming force against the capital. Little by little after stubborn fighting the insurgents gave ground, and at length in an agony

*Establishment
of the Com-
mune.*

of despair lost all self-restraint, cruelly murdered the Archbishop of Paris and other hostages whom they held in their hands, and set fire to many of the public buildings. The want of self-restraint was not all on one side. Little or no quarter was given by the assaulting troops, prisoners were shot in batches, and the triumph of the Assembly of Versailles was marked by vindictive cruelty.

There could scarcely be a question as to the position which England should take up in the presence of such events; as English interests were by no means directly involved in the quarrel, a policy of neutrality was almost necessarily imposed upon the Government. It is however always difficult for a great Power to play the part of a neutral with success. Its duty as a leading State seems to lie in moderating the demands of both the contending parties with a view

Position of
England in the
Franco-German
War.

to re-establishing peace. It cannot merely stand aloof.

The limits of its interference are always open to question. Its ancient friendships seem to demand some effective action, its refusal to recognise the claim is likely to excite the anger of both sides. In the widespread ramifications of national intercourse it is strange if it does not find its interests more or less indirectly involved in the course of the war. It was with the full knowledge of the difficulties that would attend it that the Government decided to adopt a neutral policy. Before the actual outbreak of hostilities the good offices of England were used not without effect in urging upon the Prussian King his disavowal of the Hohenzollern candidature, and on the other side, in vain, in efforts to persuade the French to lessen the arrogant demands which they raised.

But almost immediately the strength of the determination of the Government to maintain a friendly neutrality was severely strained. There was a prevalent feeling in England that France had forced the war on Prussia, and English sympathy was at first entirely upon the German side. Bismarck, not unnaturally anxious to weaken as far as

Bismarck's
revelation of
the Belgian
Treaty.

possible the connection, now of considerable standing, between France and England, communicated to the *Times* a project of a treaty, written in the handwriting of the French Ambassador Benedetti, by which it was proposed to secure to France the possession of Belgium in exchange for certain advantages guaranteed on the other hand to Prussia. The independence of Belgium was a cardinal point in the foreign policy of England, and here to all appearance was our intimate ally quietly trafficking for the possession of that country. The project was the result of certain discussions of a somewhat earlier date between the

French Ministry and Bismarck, and was written at the dictation of the German statesman. It had been summarily rejected by both Courts, but the document remained in Bismarck's hands and was now produced with great effect. It is true that Bismarck was himself as much implicated in the matter as Benedetti. But it at least proved how great was the jealousy felt by France of Prussian aggrandisement, and how ready the diplomatists of the Empire were to discuss any means however unscrupulous which might secure a countervailing advantage to France. It thus threw a somewhat awkward light upon the action of the Emperor in forcing on the war.

Before the whole truth was known the excitement caused in England by the revelation of the project was considerable, and even when more fully understood it appeared to show how easily a point of the first interest to England might be touched by the coming war. The cry was loud that friendly neutrality was not enough, that an armed neutrality was necessary. The Government stood firm, but listened so far to the loud demands raised that it contracted a special treaty, signed on the 26th of August, both with France and Prussia, to the effect that it would join in arms either party to repel any encroachment upon the integrity of Belgium. It also agreed to a very considerable increase of the army. About the same time a second form of pressure was put upon the Government. England was not alone as a neutral Power; and from several of the other large countries of Europe, and especially from Italy, came eager suggestions that the neutral Powers should enter into a formal combination. This also Lord Granville was wise enough to reject. He declared himself willing to go no further than an interchange between England and other countries of an assertion that they would not depart from their neutral attitude. From this position Lord Granville never wavered, and was therefore able to deny the charge made by the French Government and reiterated by the English Opposition, that by placing herself at the head of a neutral league England had prevented other countries from giving to France the assistance they would otherwise have been willing to afford. The want of effectual mediation was the next great accusation brought against the Ministers. It was again and again asserted by the English Opposition, and with almost passionate earnestness by the French as their misfortunes increased upon them. Yet it would appear to be groundless. While France was still under the Emperor and with hopes of re-establishing its affairs, the French Government had plainly told Lord Granville that they had no objection to an understanding

The policy of
friendly neu-
trality firmly
maintained.

between the neutral Powers, but that under present circumstances no offer of mediation from any quarter would be listened to. Lord Granville could only say that "her Majesty's Government had no desire to obtrude their mediation, but that France might be assured that if at any time recourse should be had to their good offices they would be freely given and zealously exerted." The impossibility at that time of any mediation was accepted by all the great Powers of Europe. The fall of the Empire changed the tone of France. The English Foreign Office was besieged by repeated requests to intervene in some way or other and to make propositions to Prussia. But at the same time, in fact on the same day, that the first of these requests was sent, Jules Favre had made his famous declaration against the cession of an inch of French territory. The reply of the English Foreign Office had been to the effect that more harm than good would be done by any attempt to mediate except upon a basis acceptable to both parties. But Bismarck's counter proclamation had indicated with perfect clearness that Prussia would require some territorial cession. The common basis could therefore not be found. It was in fact now Bismarck's turn to hold at arm's-length any offered mediation, as the French Empire had done while it still believed in its power. Nor was there ever a time till the final surrender of Paris when such a ground of intervention could be found. A deaf ear was therefore of necessity turned to the eager pleadings of the French, who urged in plain words that an armed intervention to restrain Prussia was desirable, and deplored with bitterness the abandonment of France by Europe.

Yet England never ceased to do what was possible for the interests of peace. It was through English instrumentality that the interview between Jules Favre and Bismarck in September was arranged; advantage was taken of the danger admitted even by the Germans of famine in Paris to press with great urgency the necessity of an armistice for calling a National Assembly; and Lord Granville even risked a somewhat humiliating rebuff from Bismarck by pressing on him, in spite of his well-known determination to engage only in direct negotiation, the presence of Mr. Odo Russell at Versailles, and certain alternatives suggested by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. Even at the very close of the war a despatch of remonstrance was sent to the Prussians, which, while it acknowledged that in the full tide of its success Germany had not unreasonably refused the dictation of those who had stood aloof from the war, pointed out that were France to be totally ruined, and

Germany "left with no resource but to sieze and occupy vast territories filled with unwilling inhabitants, blame would attach to her for having rejected not the intervention but the good offices of some of the neutral Powers of a character which had so often led to satisfactory results in international disputes." Nor did the friendly work of England cease with the war. It was largely owing to her representations that the enormous war indemnity was decreased from six to five milliards of francs. It is difficult to see how the Government could possibly have done more than it did unless it was disposed to take the extreme step of intervening in arms, which no party in England seriously desired. Yet there were not wanting men who pretended to see in the temperate tone adopted and in the genuine effort to preserve a true neutrality a want of spirit which tended to lower England in the eyes of Europe.

The same feeling was excited with scarcely more reason by the action of Government with regard to the modification of the Treaty of Paris of 1856. Whatever chance of joint action between England and Russia in the French quarrel existed was checked by the sudden appearance of a declaration from Prince Gortschakoff in the autumn of 1870, asserting the right of any Power to withdraw of its own will from a Treaty to which it had been a party. The principle in the present case was to be applied to the Treaty of Paris neutralising the Black Sea. Taking advantage of the state of France and the known desire of neutrals to prevent any extension of the war, the Russian Government had determined to throw off the restrictions laid upon their country at the close of the Crimean war. The high-handed method indicated by Prince Gortschakoff's declaration was to be adopted. It was impossible for England to pass over in silence an interpretation of the rights of co-signatories of a Treaty so novel and so threatening. It was a more open question whether the change proposed was itself desirable or not. In the correspondence which ensued it was alleged by Russia that the circumstances of Europe had absolutely changed, and that on more than one occasion during the fourteen years which had elapsed since the signature of the Treaty, its provisions had been infringed, notably in the fusion of the Danubian Principalities into one Power. It was also asserted that the very clause in question had been several times infringed by the presence of ships of war in the Black Sea. It was therefore argued on the one hand that the Treaty was already in fact broken, and on the other that the change of circumstances rendered a revision of it a matter of necessity.

Various efforts
to secure peace.

Excitement
caused by the
Russian
declaration.

Inquiry among the other Courts of Europe led the English Ministry to the conclusion that they sympathised with the Russian wish to remove restrictions which could scarcely be other than humiliating to a powerful nation, and which, as that nation was now in peace and friendship with them all, seemed unnecessary. When called to account subsequently for their action the Government declared that they would have found no single ally had they insisted on the maintenance of the restrictions.

The case was different with regard to the method which Russia had employed for obtaining its wishes. The maintenance of treaties was too important to all the Powers to allow them calmly to accept the new doctrine. Bismarck was appealed to and suggested a Conference at which the point at issue might be settled by the Powers which had signed the Paris Treaty. He named St. Petersburg as the place where the Conference might be held. The friendship between the Czar and the

The Black Sea
Conference.
March 1871.

Prussian King was well known, the mistrust of Prussian ambition was great, and a strong feeling arose in England that Bismarck was playing directly into Russian hands. Lord Granville protested against the choice of locality, and to remove all doubt refused to enter into conference except upon the distinct understanding that there was no foregone conclusion, and that the meeting was to be held out of Russia. The position of England, the Power which had chiefly insisted upon the restriction, was recognised. Lord Granville's objections were allowed, and the Conference assembled in London. As far as the principle of the maintenance of treaties was concerned the summoning of the Conference was conclusive, Russia consented to act in accordance with the wishes of the other Powers, and a declaration to that effect was the first act of the Conference on its meeting. But though the discussion was nominally free, the conclusion was after all a foregone one. The clauses which neutralised the Black Sea and forbade the presence in its waters of ships of war even of Russia and Turkey were removed. The principle that the Dardanelles and Bosphorus should be closed against external Powers during time of peace was upheld. But the Porte was allowed to open them to friendly Powers if the stipulations of the Paris Treaty were in danger. The change was no doubt a severe blow to English diplomacy. The revised clauses were regarded as the chief fruit of the Crimean war; not unnaturally the action of Government in resigning them was subjected to the severest comment. It was in vain that the general feeling of Europe was explained, and the slight value set upon the clauses by Lord

Palmerston asserted; the feeling that England had suffered humiliation gained ground.

The Treaty of Washington and its attendant events tended still further to increase this feeling. Ever since the termination of the American war negotiations had been going on with regard to what were known as the *Alabama* claims. The Americans had persuaded themselves that England had played an unfriendly part during the contest, and, smarting under the injury inflicted on their trade by privateers wholly or in part fitted out in England, had demanded compensation for the alleged breach of its neutral duties on the part of England with a persistence and acrimony which seemed at times likely to produce open war. The English, aware that their effort to preserve neutrality in the face of great difficulties had been on the whole honestly made, and believing that technically no breach of neutrality had been committed, refused to listen to the angry demands of America. But the controversy seemed so unending and so threatening in its nature that the Government, with the intention of bringing the points at issue to arbitration, consented to the appointment of a joint High Commission of English and American statesmen to draw up a treaty on the subject. On the meeting of the High Commission at Washington the Americans raised a twofold claim, for direct and indirect losses, but declined to estimate their indirect claims in the hope that some settlement would be arrived at. They suggested the payment of a lump sum to cover all demands. The English, on the other hand, denying legal obligation, suggested arbitration. This alternative the Americans accepted, but only upon condition that certain principles to govern the arbitration should be agreed upon, and produced certain statements with regard to international law the acceptance of which they looked upon as absolutely necessary. The English Commissioners declared their willingness to accept these rules as binding for the future, but denied that they existed at the time of the civil war. It required a good deal of diplomatic correspondence to surmount this difficulty, but at length the English Government yielded, and though still denying the validity of the principles at the time the *Alabama* question arose, agreed that the arbitration should take place as if the principles had been then in force. These rules therefore formed the first part of the Treaty. The English Commissioners also consented to express a general feeling of regret for the loss occasioned by the privateers. The next difficulty arose when the English advanced counter claims arising from the Fenian raids into Canada.

The Treaty of
Washington.
May 8, 1871.

The Americans refused to allow that this question came within the scope of the intended Treaty. Again the English yielded, and reserved these claims for future consideration. The second part of the Treaty referred to the fisheries. Full liberty was granted on the one side to the American fishermen to fish on the coasts of British North America with the exception always of river-fishery and shell-fish, a similar privilege being granted to British subjects on the other hand as far as the 39th parallel. The Canadians regarded this exchange as largely in favour of the States. On these terms the Treaty was completed, and for the first time in history an international quarrel was referred to a formal court of arbitrators consisting of learned men appointed by various sovereigns to meet at Geneva. Before this court the cases of the rival countries were to be laid on the 13th of June 1872.

There was a very prevalent feeling that Government had shown weakness in accepting as the basis of arbitration principles which were regarded as innovations in international law, a feeling which was considerably strengthened by the other concessions made by the Government, especially by the exclusion of the counter claims resting upon the Fenian raids. But public dissatisfaction rose still higher when it appeared that the wording of the Treaty was so loose that the Americans saw in it an opening for advancing not only their direct claims arising from injuries and losses actually caused by the privateers, but indirect claims of indefinite and incalculable extent arising from such causes as the transfer of American trade to English shipping, the expense of the pursuit of the Confederate cruisers, and even the prolongation of the war, all of which they traced to the carelessness of the English Government. The negotiators declared that they had always understood, basing their understanding chiefly upon the opening declaration of the American Commissioners, that these indirect claims had been entirely waved, and that the arbitration arranged by the Treaty applied to the direct claims only. The Government took the same view, and supported its Commissioners. The Ministers even went so far as to say that unless these claims were withdrawn they should regard the Treaty as based upon an entire misunderstanding, and refuse to recognise it. Mutual recriminations, and charges of dishonesty and double-dealing passed to and fro between the two Governments, but at length the Americans so far listened to reason that the extreme measure of repudiating the Treaty was not necessary. The arbitrators met upon the appointed day. When the English agent demanded a postponement on the ground

The "Alabama" arbitration at Geneva. June 1872.

that no agreement had been arrived at with respect to the indirect claims, the arbitrators took the matter into their own hands and declared that they did not fall within the questions referred to them, and that they would not consider them. The chief difficulty being thus withdrawn, the arbitrators set to work and shortly produced a judgment against England in the case of the *Alabama* and the *Florida*, and in some respects also of the *Shenandoah*. With regard to the other five incriminated ships the verdict was in favour of England. The court was not quite unanimous, the English arbitrator, Sir Alexander Cockburn, differing from it in respect to the *Florida* and *Shenandoah*, and considering the damages which were set at 15,500,000 dollars as excessive. The award was no doubt a heavy disappointment to England; it was felt that the country was called upon to pay dearly for the somewhat ostentatious exhibition of high-mindedness which the arbitration had involved—and the opinion grew in strength that the new method of solving international difficulties, however grand in principle, tended both to practical loss and to diminution of *prestige*.

The application of a similar method to the solution of questions at issue with regard to the limits of the English dominions in North-West America produced similar results. The definition of that boundary by the Oregon Treaty of 1846, marking out as the frontier the middle of the channel separating Vancouver's Island from the mainland and thence to the Pacific Ocean, had neglected the fact that in the very middle of that channel lay the island of San Juan. Of course the question arose to which of the Powers the island should belong, for San Juan had become of great importance since the colonisation of Vancouver's Island. The question was referred to the Emperor of Germany, and his verdict was unhesitatingly in favour of the Americans.

Arrangement of the San Juan difficulty.

The foreign policy of the Government cannot but be regarded by lovers of peace and justice as consistent and noble, yet, resulting as it did in every case in decisions hostile to what were supposed to be English interests, it was not popular, and was by many considered, though unjustly, as wanting in the spirit of self-assertion befitting a great country. Awkwardness and want of tact in the management of little matters of domestic interest threw still further discredit upon the Ministry. Two appointments, which had the appearance of arbitrary evasions of the law, laid them especially open to stricture. It had been thought desirable in 1871 to strengthen the Privy Council by appointing four paid members of the Judicial Committee, who were

to be two Indian judges and two judges of the superior Courts. The exclusion of the law-officers from the list of those upon whom the choice might fall was held to imply that the appointments were intended to be strictly non-political, and that experience as a judge was a necessary qualification; but the Government had thought fit to appoint the late Attorney-General, Sir Robert Collier, to one of the offices, having previously, in order to fulfil the letter of the law, made him a judge of Common Pleas, a position which he held for two days. Sir Robert Collier was well fitted for the place, but the appointment had so clearly the appearance of a political job that it excited grave indignation. The Lord Chief-Justice entered a protest against it. The matter was brought before the House of Lords, and after an acrimonious discussion the Government escaped a vote of censure by two votes, while even in the House of Commons they could only command a majority of twenty-seven. The effect on the public of this unfortunate appointment was the greater because in another case the same disposition of the Government to act with over-confidence and to evade the law had been traced. The Rectory of Ewelme had fallen vacant. It was provided by statute that the rector should be a member of the Oxford Convocation, but Mr. Gladstone had appointed to the living a man educated at Cambridge, and only admitted as a member of the Convocation at Oxford for the purpose of allowing of this appointment.

The course of the year 1872 had thus in no way re-established the failing popularity of the Ministry. The majority in favour of Government in the House was too strong to allow the regular Opposition to dream of acceding to power, but a general feeling of disapprobation began to pervade the country, occasionally making itself manifest in the return of an Opposition member at a bye-election.

But Mr. Gladstone, confident in the great successes of the first years of his Ministry, seemed as yet scarcely conscious of his diminished power, and determined to produce the third of those great Irish reforms which he had from the first pointed out as necessary. Having treated the questions of the Church and of the Land, he now undertook to handle the thorny question of Irish education. In the insufficiency of the University teaching, arising partly from an inadequate supply and partly from the unwillingness of the Roman Catholics to accept the opportunities offered, he saw one of those practical inequalities which it was his avowed object to remove. There was no difficulty in showing that as a fact there was very little University training in Ireland. The

Government
discredited by
two home
appointments.

Irish University
Bill.
Feb. 1873.

number of students was small and apparently gradually decreasing. Even the wealthy Trinity College, which held the University of Dublin in its hands, showed a diminution in its matriculations. The undenominational Queen's Colleges, founded in 1845, had not proved a success. It is easy to judge of the reason from the nickname by which they were called; strong religious denominationalists of all classes shrank from education given in "godless colleges." The Roman Catholics especially, unable to make use of the Protestant University of Dublin, and placing as they always did religious teaching in the forefront of education, were practically debarred from all University teaching. It was on the double ground that there remained a distinct grievance—that Roman Catholics were deprived of a civil advantage on religious grounds—and that there existed a national want in that the amount of University teaching was utterly inadequate, that Mr. Gladstone based his measure. It was plain from the nature of the case that the conciliation of the Roman Catholics must be the main object aimed at. As long as three-fourths of the population of Ireland refused to use the educational opportunities offered them any large national plan must of necessity be nugatory. The once prevalent idea of concurrent endowment had been entirely abandoned. Secular education attempted in the Queen's Colleges had proved a failure. It was by the application to the Dublin University of the principles already accepted in the reform of the English Universities that Mr. Gladstone hoped to find a solution of the difficulty. The three chief principles there applied were the abolition of tests, the separation of the University from the Colleges, and the taxing of the Colleges for the maintenance of the University. In accordance with these principles Mr. Gladstone now proposed to separate the University from Trinity College, Dublin, to make it a separate corporation, and to give it a separate governing body. To the University thus constituted the Colleges would be affiliated, each of them being at liberty to make its own constitution. The composition of the governing body was a matter of some difficulty; it was proposed that it should first consist of nominees of the Crown, but that it should be subsequently continued in a way which threw the power largely into the hands of the affiliated Colleges. The University was to be not only an examining but also a teaching body, and was to possess professorships, fellowships, and exhibitions. But limits were to be set to its teaching. It was regarded as impossible in the presence of the heated theological rivalry of Ireland to allow of chairs of theology, of mental and moral science, or of modern history. The

theological faculty already existing in Trinity College was to be withdrawn from it and placed in the hands of the disestablished Church. The expenses of the scheme were estimated at £50,000 a year, for which it was intended to provide from the surplus of the ecclesiastical property of Ireland, by taxing Trinity College to the amount of £12,000 a year, by fees, and by a grant of £10,000 from the consolidated fund.

Like all Mr. Gladstone's work the scheme was large in conception, and thoroughly and minutely worked out in detail. The eloquent

and masterly exposition with which it was introduced seemed at first to secure it general approbation. But though ostentatiously produced as a settlement of the question, and as was necessary in a measure of the kind attempting to please all parties, it soon became evident that the Bill would meet with much and varied opposition. It had been drawn up confessedly without consultation with any of the parties concerned, the Government therefore could rely upon no promises, and those whose interests were touched began at once to show their disapproval. Trinity College was not perhaps averse to be deprived of its denominational advantages, for it had already given its adhesion to Mr. Fawcett's often-repeated Bill for the removal of tests, but it could scarcely look with pleasure to being deprived of £12,000 a year for the new University. The Liberals disliked the large introduction of the power of the Crown. The Protestants objected to the possible multiplication of affiliated Colleges, and the consequent passage sooner or later of the power of the governing body into the hands of nominees of the Roman hierarchy. All men interested in education looked with ridicule upon a University where the teaching of mental and moral philosophy, theology and modern history was forbidden; and when the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, whose interests it was believed were chiefly consulted in the scheme, expressed their objection to an undenominational University of any kind, there seemed to be few outside the limits of the immediate followers of Government who looked with approval on the Bill. On the second reading, the arguments against the Bill were summed up by Mr. Disraeli. After recapitulating the objections to a curriculum of education stripped of its most important branches and throwing doubt upon the possibility of forming a fitting governing body, he gave a general character to his attack and formulated in bitter words the feeling of hostility to Mr. Gladstone's policy which was very prevalent in the country. "The right honourable gentleman," he said, "had a substitute for

Objections to
Irish University
Bill.

the policy of concurrent endowment, the policy of confiscation. You have had four years of it; you have despoiled Churches, you have threatened every corporation and endowment in the country, you have examined into everybody's affairs, you have criticised every profession and vexed every trade, no one is certain of his property, no one knows what duties he may have to perform to-morrow." The reforming energy of Mr. Gladstone and his Government, however exhibited, was in fact disturbing the conservative feeling of England. It was in vain that Mr. Gladstone replied to the objections raised, and urged in earnest words that "to mete out justice to Ireland according to the best view that with human infirmity Irish University could be formed had been the work, he might almost say the sacred work, of this Parliament," and exhorted the House to proceed as they had begun, "and efface from the law and practice of the country the last of the religious and social grievances of Ireland." The combination of Conservatives with the Roman Catholics and discontented Liberals proved too strong for the measure, and it was defeated by a majority of three.

Somewhat rashly Mr. Gladstone had staked the existence of his Cabinet upon success. He therefore immediately placed his resignation in the Queen's hands. But the Conservatives were by no means ready to take office, and Mr. Disraeli as their leader positively refused to undertake the government with the existing Parliament. He judged wisely that for the interests of his party nothing could be more damaging than the attempt to hold the reins of power in the presence of a majority which on all points of great national interest would certainly be opposed to him. As a dissolution appeared at present impossible, and as in fact the question of Irish University reform could scarcely be regarded as one of vital importance, Mr. Gladstone found it necessary to return to office. No doubt in thus acting Mr. Disraeli showed his wisdom as a party leader. Acceptance of office at the moment, unless accompanied by a dissolution, must have placed the conduct of Government for some months at the mercy of their opponents, and when the dissolution came at the close of the session the Conservatives would have appealed to the country as a weak and discredited party. Whether his conduct is so easily justified when looked at from a constitutional point of view may be doubted. The understood necessity of accepting office should they defeat the Ministry is one of the chief restraints upon the Opposition. Their refusal to do so on the other hand seems to leave the Government of the day free

Gladstone re-
signs, March 13;
returns,
March 20, 1873.

to act without any appeal, for if no other Government is possible they act under no penalty in case of want of success. The effect seems injurious to the country in both directions. The point which may be urged in Mr. Disraeli's justification is the character of the Bill on which the Government had resigned. It was not of such a kind as to engage the warm interest of the nation; the majority which had defeated it consisted of a fortuitous combination, an appeal to the people immediately following it could have been little else than a personal contest between the leaders.

The restored Government was still in the command of its majority in the House, but its position was materially weakened by the defeat it had undergone, and by its ineffectual effort at resignation. Yet it succeeded in passing at least one Act of primary importance, the Judicature Bill. The object at which this measure aimed, as explained by Lord Selborne, was to get rid as far as possible of the anomalies of the present system and to weld into one the legal and equitable jurisdiction, the separation of which was unknown in any other country. Various attempts had already been made in this direction, and a strong commission had in 1869 been appointed to consider the question. Lord Selborne did not hesitate to say that he had reaped the fruits of former attempts, so that in drawing up his Bill he was able to set out with several already accepted principles before him. The amalgamation of law and equity, the centralisation of courts and jurisdictions under one supreme court, cheapness, simplicity, and uniformity of procedure, and the improvement of the Courts of Appeal were points on which all parties were already agreed. The measure which was to fulfil these requirements consisted of the establishment of one supreme Court of Judicature, in which were to be united all the present superior Courts of Common Law and Equity, the Probate and Divorce Court, the Admiralty Court, and the Central Court of Bankruptcy. This supreme Court was to be divided into two branches, a High Court of Justice, and a Court of Appeal. The High Court of Justice was for convenience to be broken up into Divisions, in many respects following the lines of the old system but with this important exception, that in all the Divisions the judges were to administer equity as well as law. With regard to the Court of Appeal, the four existing Courts of Review were also consolidated, and in the place of the Exchequer Chamber, the Courts of Appeal in Chancery, the House of Lords, and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, a single Court of Appeal incorporating representatives from all these branches was

*The Judicature
Bill.*
April 1873.

established. Lord Selborne's Bill contemplated the entire cessation of double appeals; the decision of the Appeal Court was to be final. Alterations were subsequently found desirable in the details of the Bill, the system of Divisions was modified, and the House of Lords regained the right of reviewing the decisions of the Court of Appeal. But the main principles of the Bill were maintained, the great work of the fusion of law and equity was completed, and a uniform system of judicature was once for all established. This Act was the only legislative work of importance brought to completion during the year. There were indeed abundant signs of activity among the private members of the House, but their attempts were for the most part thwarted either by the opposition of the Upper House, or by the attitude maintained by Government. It would seem as though in the consciousness that its growing unpopularity was traceable to over-activity, it was inclined to allow a period of rest to intervene before undertaking any other important steps. Thus Mr. Gladstone declared himself strongly opposed to any measure tending to the present disestablishment of the English Church, and the cause of temperance was allowed to suffer a severe defeat by the rejection of the Permissive Bill by a large majority.

In two directions public interest was attracted to affairs outside the kingdom. The advance of Russia upon Khiva excited the ever-smouldering jealousy with which the approach of that Power towards India was regarded; while on the West Coast of Africa a sharp if inglorious contest with the King of Ashantee had been carried on. In the first years of its tenure of office the Government had entered into certain negotiations with Holland. Full freedom of action was given to the Dutch in Sumatra on the southern side of the Straits of Malacca, to the injury as it was affirmed of the British traffic through the straits. The consideration for this concession had been the transfer to the English of certain Dutch forts upon the African Gold Coast. To all appearance such a transfer was a wise one, for in old times commercial rivalry had caused the establishment in close proximity of Dutch and English factories or trading stations, and the erection of forts to protect them, so that the settlements of the two nations were curiously intermixed. But though there seemed to be obvious reasons for desiring a cessation of this close neighbourhood and rivalry, an oversight in the method of carrying out the transfer produced disastrous results. Each nation had entered into relation with the surrounding tribes and exercised a sort of protection over those in the immediate neighbourhood of the

*The Ashantee
war.* 1873.

settlements. Behind and somewhat to the north of the coast tribes lay the powerful and warlike race of the Ashantees. More than once they had assaulted the European possessions on the coast and had been with difficulty driven back. The Dutch and English pursued a somewhat different commercial policy; the Dutch, unlike the English, made no attempt in their settlements to raise a revenue by customs; the Ashantees were therefore able to supply themselves through the Dutch with European produce untaxed. Not unnaturally their friendship followed their interest, especially as the English protectorate included the Fantees whom they disliked and despised. The Treaty had been carried out without consulting the wishes of the natives, the English system was established in the transferred settlements, and the Ashantees thus found themselves cut off from their free access to the coast. Other minor difficulties arose, and suddenly a host of savages invaded the English protectorate, and advanced to the immediate neighbourhood of Cape Coast Castle. In June 1873 they assaulted Elmina, one of the Dutch fortresses which had lately changed hands, close to Cape Coast Castle. They were beaten off by Colonel Festing with a body of seamen and marines. But the invasion was so threatening that it was thought necessary at home to despatch an expedition of sufficient importance to put an end for ever to danger from the Ashantees. At the head of it was placed Sir Garnet Wolseley. He was intrusted with two English regiments, but he was given to understand that their employment was undesirable unless the native levies which had been organised should prove insufficient. Fettered by these instructions and with very deficient information, Sir Garnet Wolseley missed the opportunity of striking a decisive blow while the Ashantee force was near the coast. The scattered fighting of the autumn had proved the untrustworthiness of the native levies, and it became necessary to push forward direct for Coomassie, the Ashantee capital, with the English troops. After a difficult march through close bush and exposed to constant unexpected assault from their savage enemies, the troops towards the close of January approached Coomassie. Two battles, in which the Ashantees displayed much bravery and caused considerable loss to their assailants, cleared the way to the capital. More than once during the march King Koffee Calcalli had expressed a desire to treat, and on one occasion the negotiations advanced so far that the English general supposed that the war was over. The offers of the Ashantee king however appear not to have been serious; even after the capture of his capital he refused to sign the required conditions. The climate and the

exposed position of the English army rendered delay impossible. It was all the general could do to bring his troops into the town, immediate retreat was a matter of necessity. He therefore burnt the palace and the town, and set off on his return march. But the war was not to be concluded in this unsatisfactory manner. A division of English troops under Captain Glover had advanced to the capital by another route. Its approach frightened the king into submission. He sent messengers to demand the draft of the treaty from Wolseley, and some weeks subsequently the treaty was properly signed. Captain Glover's forces marched through Coomassie and joined the rest of the troops, so that the whole army returned in triumph together. Although the Ashantee war was but another instance of those little wars against savage countries which are the deplorable result of the character of the English Empire, the gallantry displayed by the troops and the skill with which the operations were arranged were at least a cause of satisfaction, while the barbarous nature of the Ashantee government precluded any feeling of regret at its destruction.

But the successful conclusion of the war was not destined to add to the popularity of the Ministry which had sent out the expedition. Before its return the great Ministry of Mr. Gladstone had fallen; it was a Conservative War Minister who moved the vote of thanks to the victorious troops. Mr. Gladstone had taken a step which if the possession of power be the object of party was singularly unfortunate. If a higher view than party objects be taken it will perhaps appear that his action was no less wise than that of his rival had been in declining office the previous year. It had been found necessary immediately after the close of the session to make considerable changes in the Ministry; the disagreement of views among the supporters of Government that was thus disclosed was a revelation of weakness. Several important elections had gone against the Liberals during the recess. Yet the world was taken a good deal by surprise when towards the end of January a manifesto was issued by the Prime Minister declaring that Parliament was to be dissolved. It is possible that he entirely miscalculated the strength of the Liberal party in the country, and hoped that a general election would give him a new lease of power. Be that as it may, there were at all events grave evils in the present position of parties in Parliament which he felt acutely. The Ministry was discredited by failure and only continued in office because their opponents had refused to accept it. They no longer held that command of public affairs which is necessary for a strong Government,

*Dissolution of
Parliament.
Jan. 24, 1874.*

and were constantly thwarted by the action of the Upper House. On the other side sat an Opposition which refused to define its policy, and declining to accept the responsibility which ought to have resulted from victory confined itself to the easy task of criticising and opposing. The existence of a Ministry should depend not on the toleration of its opponents, but on the expression of the national will. If such an expression could be obtained as would justify his remaining in power Mr. Gladstone hoped that, as usually happened, the opposition in the Upper House would disappear; and that with the full support of the country he might enter upon a new course of financial improvement. Having in his hands as he believed a surplus of more than £5,000,000, he saw the possibility of getting rid entirely of the income-tax. His declaration of this intention has been bitterly blamed as though it were the offer of a gigantic bribe in exchange for restoration to power. Yet never from the first, although he had made use of it, had he hidden his disapproval of that tax. In its nature a war tax, it had been applied with extraordinary success to assist in the reconstitution of our financial system. But it had always been regarded as an exceptional tax, and for a considerable time had been renewed from year to year only. Mr. Gladstone had in fact throughout his Ministry been preparing the way for its abolition. His Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lowe, had constantly reduced it till it had reached 3d. in the pound, and in his unsuccessful Budget of 1871 had given an indication of the nature of that rearrangement which Mr. Gladstone now declared would necessarily accompany the removal of the tax. In the alteration then suggested was included a considerable addition to the succession duties. It was to this that the Premier looked as his new resource. In the place of the income-tax with its recognised imperfections he intended to substitute taxes directly affecting realised property, and thus tending not only to cure the great fault of the income-tax, but also to diminish the ever-increasing inequalities in the distribution of wealth. He was not allowed the opportunity of carrying out his great scheme. The Church, the dissenters, the army, the licensed victuallers, the men of property, and the sticklers for national self-assertion had all alike felt themselves aggrieved by the action of late years. The elections gave them an opportunity of expressing their resentment, and the constituencies returned a majority of fifty to the Conservative party. Mr. Gladstone at once resigned, and Mr. Disraeli was summoned to form a new administration.

Mr. Gladstone's intention with regard to the income-tax.

Resignation of Ministry.
Feb. 17, 1874.

Thus fell the great administration of Mr. Gladstone during which the Liberal desires, kept in abeyance throughout Lord Palmerston's tenure of office, had at length made themselves felt. Although it closed in some unpopularity, there was truth in Mr. Lowe's assertion that no Government had ever approached office with so vast a programme, and yet that with the solitary exception of the Dublin University Bill it had carried that programme through. The Irish Land Bill, the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, the Education Act, the introduction of the Ballot and the Judicature Bill, the abolition of purchase in the army, the organisation of the military forces, the opening of the Civil Services to public competition, the inauguration of the system of international arbitration were achievements sufficient to render any Ministry in the last degree memorable. To this may be added that either by skill or fortune they had been able to place the finances of the country in an extraordinarily prosperous condition. The remission of £12,000,000 of taxes, the payment of £26,000,000 of the National Debt, the diminution of the income-tax to 3d. in the pound, had still left a surplus in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That Ireland had been put in the forefront of the political programme shows only the true appreciation by the Premier, which every subsequent year has tended to justify, of the vast importance to England of the condition of that country. His determination to remove every shadow of political or religious inequality proves how thoroughly he sympathised with those sentiments of justice which, however much overlaid at times by party ends and relics of old prejudice, had formed the basis of the Liberal policy of England from the time when its conscience was called into life at the period of the Reform Bill. The character of those Irish reforms seems to show that, though their full significance was not yet foreseen by the Liberal leaders, there yet existed no fundamental objection to applying them, when the time should arise and the necessity be evident, to cure the ills of society in England. In fact already it would seem that although he was very decidedly opposed to the idea of Church disestablishment his opposition was practical rather than theoretical. And, although no indication is as yet to be found that legislation with regard to land was in contemplation, the consistent refusal to support any measures for what was known as the relief of agricultural burdens, the sweeping clauses of Mr. Goschen's abortive Local Taxation Bill, may be held as proofs that Mr. Gladstone held the landlords in no particular favour; while the abolition of the income-tax was intended to go hand in

General view of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry.

hand with such a rearrangement of the succession duties as proves clearly enough how large his view was with regard to the duty of realised property to bear the chief burdens of the state.

But England would not be what it is if side by side with its warm desire for justice and improvement there did not exist a desire almost equally strong on the one hand that every man and every interest should be allowed quietly to follow out their own concerns, and on the other hand that the greatness of England and the importance of the part it plays in the councils of the world should be undiminished. With this class of feelings the late Government had come into collision. In the opinion of a large mass of Englishmen, as it proved in the opinion of the majority of the constituency, legislation had been carried too far. Every interest and every trade it was asserted had been vexed and worried. The principle of social duty, the good of the state as contrasted with the good of the individual, had been pushed to dangerous extremes, a policy of confiscation had been entered upon. The principle of peace and non-intervention had been used in a way detrimental to English interests and to the damage of the high position of the nation. It would have been well, it was said, if Mr. Gladstone had paid less attention to constant legislation in England and more to the position of the Empire abroad. It is as the expression of this feeling that the triumph of the Conservative party in the elections must be regarded. Rest at home, kindly improvement given from above to the poorer classes, but above all the assertion of the Imperial position of England was the programme of the new Premier.

It must not be supposed that the history of the legislative and political action of the time, important though it was, forms a sufficient index of the state of the nation. It is now evident that a great social revolution was working itself out. Questions regarding the mutual relations between capital and labour, and between the propertied classes and those who lived by manual toil on uncertain wages, were rapidly forcing themselves into prominence. Undoubtedly the legislation of the time, such as the Irish Land Law, the lowering of the franchise and the introduction of the ballot, were indications in the sphere of politics of the social movement which was taking place below. But the objects of the working classes were not such as could be touched by political legislation. For many years there had been a tendency in England to concentrate in a few hands the means of employing labour. This tendency was visible in all directions; in retail trade large establish-

Causes for the fall of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry.

Social progress during Mr. Gladstone's Ministry.

ments occupying many houses were taking the place of small separate shops; small agricultural holdings were disappearing in large farms covering vast extents of country; the great manufacturing capitalist was gradually driving from the field the smaller competitor. The comparatively limited number of men in whose hands wealth thus lay held each of them at their disposal the work and therefore the livelihood of hundreds of labouring men. It seemed as though the triumph of capital was likely to be complete. But the very numbers of the dependent working class afforded an antidote to this evil. In their fellowship of powerlessness they began to discover the strength which combination could give them. The vast extension of their Societies led them to think their strength irresistible; the greatness of the stake of each individual capitalist made him shrink from an internecine struggle. And as step by step the obstacles which the triumphant employer had for centuries raised in the way of combined action on the part of their workmen disappeared, the class which had hitherto been so depressed began to aim at nothing short of obtaining for itself the complete command of the destinies and organisation of labour. Combination and organisation among themselves were the means to be employed for gradually obtaining this dictatorial position.

The most direct and palpable signs of the movement were the growing importance of Trades Unions, the multiplication of strikes, and the occasional outrages attending trade disputes. Spread of Trades Unions. Although of late years legislation had partially recognised the legality of the combination of workmen, and had allowed them to be enrolled as Friendly Societies, it had left unaltered many restrictions upon their freedom of combination, and among others their incapacity to sue a fraudulent treasurer or secretary who should make free with their funds. The demand of the Unionists to be placed upon a strictly legal footing had made itself heard, emphasised as it was by a certain number of outrages which had taken place at Sheffield and at Manchester. Lord Derby's Government had in 1867 appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the ends, ways, means, and effects of Trades Societies. The inquiries of this Commission led them to suppose that the conduct of the Unionists in Sheffield and Manchester was of so exceptional and so violent a character as to demand special investigation. The evidence laid before a small Commission appointed for this purpose threw a terrible light upon the evils which might attend Trades-unionism. It appeared that in Sheffield the coercion practised upon the non-union men was most pitiless. Rattening—that is, the abstracting or spoiling of the

workmen's tools and apparatus—was of common occurrence; while at times the violence used reached to explosions, maiming, and even murder. In spite of these terrible facts the report of the Commission was by no means wholly adverse to the Unionists. It was seen that local violence should not be regarded as an essential part of the system. The report fully admitted the reasonableness and legality of combination, recommended the removal by statute of that stain of illegality about the Societies which rendered them unable to secure their funds from embezzlement, and suggested further restrictions and definitions as to the meaning of the ambiguous words "obstruction" and "molestation," the wide interpretation of which had hitherto acted so injuriously upon the workmen's Societies.

An Act of 1871 carried out these recommendations. Trades Unions were recognised as legal, their treasurers and trustees were made as liable as those of other Friendly Societies to be sued for misuse of the funds; and, except in certain definite cases, only such conduct as would authorise a magistrate to bind the perpetrator over to keep the peace was to be regarded as criminal molestation. In spite of the loud outcry of the masters and their friends, in spite of the inevitable discredit thrown upon their cause by the terrible excesses of some of their members, the Trades Unions were thus placed in a more secure and powerful position than before. The number of members in the chief Societies increased rapidly. Between the years 1870 and 1875 the Amalgamated Engineers rose from 34,000 to 44,000, and the Stone Masons from 13,000 to 24,000. In some cases, as for instance in the Iron Shipbuilders' Union, which increased from 7000 to 16,000, the introduction of a new form of industry was the cause. But within those five years the members probably increased by more than two-thirds.

Prevalence of strikes. 1872. The success of the Unionists produced no relaxation in their efforts. The year 1872 was marked by an unusual number of important strikes. The movement even infected a class which had hitherto submissively accepted its lot; under the influence of the stirring eloquence of Joseph Arch, who had himself been an agricultural labourer, Unions were established in several counties which unquestionably exerted considerable influence in raising agricultural wages. At one time in the Midland Counties 16s. a week became the usual wage. The awakening of the agricultural labourer brought to the front many questions besides those of wages. Improved sanitation and better cottages began to be demanded, and already indications were seen of the possible spread

of an opinion akin to that already prevalent in Ireland that the labourer had, or ought to have, some interest in the soil he cultivated. A great strike in the building trade resulted in considerable advantages for the men. But the sympathy with which many people regarded these efforts on the part of the workmen to better their condition began to lessen when their action threatened formidable disturbance to the public comfort. A strike of the London bakers, of the police, and of the gas stokers seemed to touch so closely the very necessities of civilised life, that the severe sentences passed upon some of the strikers and the summary dismissal by the Gas Companies of many hundreds of their men met with general approbation.

The general feeling indeed of the propertied classes as evinced by the more important papers was strongly opposed to Trades-unionism and its effects. The ruinous and suicidal waste which strikes were supposed to cause was constantly emphasised by the Press. The risk of frightening capital from the country, the tyrannical rule (as it was held) of the minority among the workmen, and the loss thrown as it was thought, in whichever way the strike terminated, upon the public, were all incessant subjects of complaint. Yet in their own way the wealthy felt considerable sympathy for their poorer fellow-citizens. The efforts at independent action implied by Trades-unionism shocked them. They shrank from anything which had the appearance of changing the balance of classes. But of beneficence, and kindly patronage, and help as from superiors to inferiors, there was no lack. Taking advantage of this well-known feeling, which existed more especially among the Conservatives, a strange effort was made to connect the names of several important Conservative leaders with those of the most prominent leaders of the people in a document setting forth a sort of programme of popular requirements. Seven points were named:—The rescue of workmen's families from the dismal alleys of towns by planting them out in the midst of gardens and detached homesteads; to carry out this object the creation of a perfect organisation of the self-government of counties, towns, and villages, with power for the acquisition and disposal of land for the common good; the limitation of a day's labour to eight hours of honest work; the establishment of technical schools in the midst of the people's homesteads; the organisation as parts of the public service of places of public recreation, knowledge, and refinement; public markets for the sale of goods in

Dislike of Trades-unionism among the propertied classes.

Attempted union of Conservatives and working men.

small quantities and of the best qualities at wholesale prices ; and a great extension of the organisation of the public services on the model of the Post-Office for the common good. This curious programme of mingled benevolence and state socialism purported to be signed by Lord Salisbury, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Carnarvon, Mr. Gathorne Hardy and others, as well as by such popular leaders as Applegarth the joiner, Howell, Potter, and Barry. Mr. Scott Russell the engineer appears to have been the originator of the movement. It is almost needless to say that the Conservative leaders at once repudiated any such scheme, which was to all appearance designed to make capital for the Tory party by contrasting their social benevolence with the drier and more political treatment of popular requirements by the Liberals. Yet such an idea would never have arisen had there not been some foundation for it ; and subsequent legislation on the part of the Conservatives has proved that on many points affecting the welfare of the working classes they were as a fact more alive to the popular wants than their Liberal opponents, who had learned by the whole course of the history of their party to look for remedies for social evils in the extension of political privilege.

CHAPTER XII.

MR. DISRAELI'S MINISTRY, February 1874.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Mr. Disraeli.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Cairns.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Duke of Richmond.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Malmesbury.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Sir Stafford Northcote.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Cross.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Carnarvon.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Derby.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Mr. Gathorne Hardy.
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Lord Salisbury.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Mr. Ward Hunt.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Sir Charles Adderley.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Lord John Manners.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Colonel Taylor.
<i>President of the Local Government Board</i>	Mr. Sclater Booth.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord-Lieutenant,</i>	Duke of Abercorn.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Ball.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.

The following changes subsequently took place :—

<i>Lord-Lieutenant for Ireland,</i>	Duke of Marlborough, November 1876.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Mr. W. H. Smith, August 1877.

The following changes took place in March 1878 on the resignation of Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon :—

<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Duke of Northumberland.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Sir M. Hicks-Beach.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Salisbury.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Colonel Stanley.
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Lord Cranbrook (Mr. Gathorne Hardy).
<i>Chief Secretary for Ireland,</i>	Mr. Lowther.

THOUGH the triumph of the Conservative party had been very complete, and Mr. Disraeli now found himself for the first time the trusted leader of a large majority both in the House and in the

constituencies, no great or immediate change of policy was observable.

*Peculiarity of
Mr. Disraeli's
position.*

The Premier's position was unusually powerful. It was well understood that to his skilful direction of the party its present success was due. At the same time the Opposition was weakened by the declared intention of Mr. Gladstone frequently to absent himself from the House, and to give but a limited attention to the duties of leadership. But although the clamour raised against the late Ministry had been bitter and incessant, when the responsibility came into the hands of the new Prime Minister he appeared to justify the assertions of his opponents, and either to have no fixed line of policy to pursue, or to think it unwise as yet to follow it. Yet the accusation of want of policy so freely brought against him was unreasonable. Whatever his disapprobation may have been of the measures which had been taken, it was consistent neither with the traditions of his party nor indeed with the character of the English Government to attempt immediately to change them. The acceptance by the incoming party of the actions of its predecessors, so as at least to allow them a fair chance of being tried by experience, is necessary in a country where the alternation of parties is so frequent as in England. The immediate reversal of important measures upon the accession of a new Ministry could not but result in complete uncertainty and confusion. There was no course open at first to the new Ministry but to accept, amending if possible, the great Acts of the preceding years. Moreover the one objection most frequently alleged against Mr. Gladstone had been his reckless interference with all classes. Rest in domestic legislation was distinctly one of the objects which the Conservatives set before them; it was not till new questions, or new circumstances connected with old questions, arose, that the Government could find an opportunity of showing their political views.

The Ministry seemed to accept and even to approve of all that its predecessors had done. A terrible famine was devastating Bengal. Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy, while stirring up the officials to meet the danger and to avoid that quiescent course of *laissez-faire* which had produced such terrible results in Orissa in former years, had yet taken the bold step of allowing export of food to be continued, trusting to the working of the laws of supply and demand to divert the food coming down from the Upper Provinces to the famishing districts. His conduct met with approval and praise from the new Ministry, and in the result its wisdom was vindicated. The Licensing Act, which had gone so far to alienate

*General
character of the
Government.*

the powerful body of licensed victuallers, was allowed with very slight amendments to continue in force. No attempt was made to change the new scheme for the organisation of the army. Alterations in rating suggested by Mr. Stansfeld were adopted and passed by Mr. Slater Booth; and Mr. Cross's Bill for limiting the labour hours for women and children in factories was substantially the same as that of Mr. Mundella. Even the Judicature Bill, though it touched the authority of the House of Lords, met with general approval by the new Lord Chancellor, and the Bill incorporating some slight amendments, and extending its principles to Ireland, was only withdrawn under stress of circumstances, after its passage was a matter of certainty.

The important discussions of the year all turned upon ecclesiastical questions. Three Bills, the one for the amendment of the Endowed Schools Act, the second for the arrangement of patronage in the Scotch Church, and the third for the regulation of public worship in England, afforded occasion for warm debate. In all three the object was one legitimately forming part of any Conservative policy, the strengthening of the Established Church. The first of them (the only instance of a reversal of policy) proposed to put an end to the Endowed Schools Commission, and to transfer its power to the already existing Charity Commissioners, and, secondly, to restore to the Church of England a considerable number of *The Endowed Schools Act amended.* schools. It had been the principle of the Act to treat as national all endowments made before the Act of Uniformity of 1661. Dissent having been unrecognised till then, and the Church having been regarded as co-extensive with the nation, no man, it was argued, having any religious intentions with regard to his school could have connected it with any religious body except the Church of England; all such schools therefore had by the Endowed Schools Act been made entirely undenominational. It was now proposed that the Church should resume its exclusive rights, in cases where the will of the founder showed a clear intention to connect his school with the Church. The want of wisdom of this retrograde policy was attacked with much eagerness by Mr. Gladstone, and the probability of the Liberal party finding a point of union on this question became evident. To avoid so undesirable a result, Mr. Disraeli, making the curious assertion that careful study had induced him to think that the Government propositions were incomprehensible, consented to their withdrawal, and the first half of the Bill alone passed.

The Church Patronage Bill aimed at destroying lay patronage in the Established Church of Scotland, and intrusting the choice of their

minister to the congregations. The circumstances of the two countries were so different that this proposition, which in England would have been regarded as a step towards disestablishment, was in Scotland avowedly made for the purpose of strengthening the Establishment. For two centuries the difficulty had been before the Scotch Church. More than once the law in the matter had been changed. It had not long since given rise to the great schism, and the secession of the Free Church. The value of the right of presentation was very small, and it was strongly urged by men whose opinion could scarcely be questioned that experience led to the belief that better men would be obtained by free choice than by nomination. From the Scotch dissenters, however, the Bill called out violent opposition. They had been driven from the Church, they asserted, upon this very point, and here was the Establishment declaring itself in the wrong, but taking care to keep the endowments; no such measure, they urged, would be fair unless a great effort were first made for a reunion of the Churches. Though their opposition was warmly supported by Mr. Gladstone, the Bill was carried by a large majority.

The third of the ecclesiastical Bills produced far more excitement, and by the lengthened debates which accompanied it practically compelled the withdrawal of most of the other Government measures. There had arisen among the High Church a section which seemed bent on assimilating the English Church as far as possible with the Church of Rome. Confession was avowedly taught and practised, and an amount of ceremony and decoration used in certain parts of

The Public Worship Bill. the service which, unless it was employed merely from an idle and trumpery love of millinery, must have been symbolical of doctrines on the repudiation of which the Church of England was based. The difficulties which lay in the way of the legal repression of such excesses, and the growing disposition of those who practised them to disregard Episcopal authority even with contempt, induced the Archbishops to introduce into the Upper House a Bill for the purpose of regulating the forms of public worship, and establishing a direct and easy method of settling the legality of practices against which objection was made. It was proposed that the Bishop should have the sole power of directing worship, assisted by a Board of Assessors, lay and clerical. From their decision an appeal lay to the Archbishop and his assessors, whose decision was to be final. Lord Salisbury, who represented the Government in the Upper House, although not at once adopting the Bill, explained that he approved

of its intention. But there was a strong feeling, to which Lord Shaftesbury gave expression, that this matter should not be left in the hands of the Bishops, for the Protestant and lay feeling of England was aroused, and with it the dread of the independence of the Church from all lay authority. In Committee he therefore proposed and succeeded in carrying an amendment to the effect that one Judge for ecclesiastical cases, appointed by the Archbishops with the approval of the Crown, should preside in the Courts of Canterbury and York, and that unless the Bishop to whom the complaint was first sent declared it frivolous, the case should be tried before this Judge, with an appeal to the Privy Council. In this shape the Bill was sent to the Lower House. It was intrusted to the management of Mr. Russell Gurney, the Recorder of London. He treated it chiefly as a matter of procedure, emphasising the present difficulties which surrounded ecclesiastical law and the advantage of freeing the Bishop from the position of prosecutor. At the same time he pointed out that there was no attempt in it to create new crimes, or to settle matters of doctrine. The opposition encountered by the Bill was unexpected; Mr. Gladstone threw himself with all his vigour into the contest. He objected to the want of concurrence between the Government and the Church in the introduction of the measure, to the want of recognition of the general excellence of the clergy which was implied, and to the right given by the Bill to a very small number of objectors to bring a case before the Bishop; he further suggested that occasional indiscretion might possibly be found among the Bench of Bishops. Before all he disliked the idea of in any way curtailing the large liberty of thought which the elasticity of the English Church allowed. He declared his intention of producing resolutions before going into Committee, giving expression to these objections. They covered so wide a field, and touched matters so closely connected with the very existence of a National Church, that there seemed every probability of the rest of the session being passed in a general ecclesiastical discussion. But men of less diffuse thought, of narrower but more practical minds, brought the question back to the limits of practical discussion; and when after much debate Mr. Disraeli, fully allowing the advantage of an elastic Church, declared that the object of the Bill was to put down Ritualism, and that Ritualism meant the "practices, by a portion of the clergy, avowedly symbolic of doctrines which the same clergy are bound in the most solemn manner to refute and repudiate," it became plain that the Government had adopted the Bill, and had made its settlement a matter of vital importance.

His speech was addressed to willing ears. The Protestant feeling of the country had risen high; the second reading of the Bill was carried unanimously, and after so strong an expression of opinion Mr. Gladstone thought it prudent to withdraw his resolutions. The clauses of the Bill were carried in Committee by great majorities, and but one amendment of importance was introduced. On this amendment the measure was however nearly wrecked. By a large majority it was carried that the complainants, if refused a hearing by the Bishop, should be able to bring their case before the Archbishop. When the Bill came back to the House of Lords the whole Bench rose in arms. "A Pope was to be set up in Canterbury and an Antipope in York," said the Bishop of Lincoln. The Bishop of Winchester declared he would rather trample his ecclesiastical robes under foot than suppose that each Bishop was not ruler by divine right in his own diocese. Lord Salisbury, though a Minister, thought it wise to support their opposition, and to talk of the bluster of the other House of Parliament. It seemed as though a quarrel between the Houses might supervene. But Mr. Disraeli skilfully worsted his refractory subordinate. He pointed out that Lord Salisbury had himself been long a member of the House of Commons, and that they knew him well. "He is one," he said, "who is a great master of jibes and flouts and jeers, but I don't suppose there is any one who is prejudiced against a member of Parliament on account of such qualifications. My noble friend knows the House of Commons well, and he is not perhaps superior to the consideration that by making a speech of that kind and taunting respectable men like ourselves as being a blustering majority, he probably might stimulate the *amour propre* of some individuals to take the course he wants and to defeat the Bill. I hope we shall not fall into that trap." After all, the action of the House of Lords in objecting to the amendment was strictly constitutional; he therefore recommended the Commons to accept the alteration rather than allow the Bill to be lost. His advice was taken. The Bill passed with the general approbation of the House, and Lord Penzance was appointed to the new Judgeship.

Mr Gladstone, whose partial retirement and frequent absences from the House had been undoubtedly inconvenient for his party, thought it better before the meeting of Parliament in 1875 to withdraw formally from his position as leader of the Opposition. His predominance had been so great, his personal leadership so complete, that it was not at once clear how his place should be supplied. Among the several possible claimants the

Retirement of
Mr. Gladstone.
Jan. 13, 1875.

choice of the party fell upon Lord Hartington, whose strong sense and straightforward determined character had gradually impressed itself upon all those with whom he had had to do. Much doubt was naturally felt as to the possibility of a man so eager and lively-minded as Mr. Gladstone, and one to whom it was believed the possession of power was so dear, being able or willing to refrain from interfering in party management. But, although Mr. Gladstone took not unfrequent part in the discussions in the House, he loyally preserved a subordinate position, nor was it till events occurred which touched the earnest and sentimental side of his character very closely, that he broke through this restraint, and by the influence which his burning words exercised proved both to himself and others how indispensable he was to the Liberal party.

Under these circumstances, as was to be expected, a period of comparative quiet in the political world ensued. Indeed the very cry against the harassing legislation of their opponents, which had served them so well upon the dissolution, compelled the Conservatives to avoid anything which could be spoken of as a heroic measure. Acceptance of what had been already done with slight alterations and amendments, and the introduction, in accordance with their declared views, of gentle measures of social improvement, formed the basis of their home policy. They had nothing new to advise for Ireland. With very slight relaxations they demanded a renewal of the Peace Preservation Act as well as of the Westmeath Act for the protection of life and property. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the Irish Secretary, and Lord Hartington, who had previously occupied that position, vied with one another in the support they gave to coercion. While, as it was urged, there had been practically little difference in the state of Ireland within the last two years, on the whole the effect of English Government since 1830, marked though it had been with a nearly unbroken line of such coercive measures, had produced most remarkable results. In 1833 Lord Grey had stated that in the last two years there had been no less than 9000 crimes connected with the disturbed state of the country; the report of the last year put the crimes of the same description at 213. Backed by such authority and by such arguments the Coercion Bills were read a second time by an overwhelming majority, and ultimately passed with very little alteration, though for many weeks the Home Rule party fought the battle in Committee, using every vantage-ground allowed by the forms of the House. In the same way the Government adopted the Judicature

Quiet domestic
legislation.

The Irish
Coercion Bills
renewed.

Bill of its predecessors. In the preceding year indeed Lord Cairns appears to have intended not only to have accepted it, but to have extended it to Ireland. Circumstances had caused it to be dropped. It was now taken up again. Its great principle, the fusion of the two branches of law and equity, was left entirely untouched. Upon the one questionable point, the final Court of Appeal, the Lord Chancellor showed that he had been affected by the Conservative arguments of the Lords, and now proposed that the Court established by the Bill should be one of intermediate appeal only. He left it uncertain what the Court of final appeal should be. For a year longer the House of Lords was as usual to act in that capacity. When in 1876 the question again arose, the House of Peers, with an addition of certain judicial Lords of Appeal, kept its old functions, and remained as the final Appeal Court.

The strange unauthorised declaration upon social points produced under the auspices of Mr. Scott Russell two years before, and its repudiation by the leaders of the Conservatives, has been mentioned. What the party was willing to do in that direction was now shown by a series of Bills which, while pretending rather largely to rectify acknowledged failings, were so timid in their character, so fearful of in any way infringing the rights of property, that they were nearly useless. The farmers had a well-grounded grievance in the want of security for the capital employed by them in improvements. The Agricultural Holdings Bill was intended to secure compensation at the close of a tenancy for capital expended by the tenant. But instead of making this compensation compulsory, every facility was given for evading by private contract the enactments of the Bill; they only became valid when no arrangement on the matter was entered into between landlord and tenant. Another Bill with regard to land was of the same somewhat disappointing character. Since the failure of Lord Westbury's Registration Act, by which it had been rendered possible for any man proving an absolute title to his land to have it registered, and his claim to it thus acknowledged once for all as complete, the advantages of registration had not appeared sufficient to induce landowners to undergo the expense and trouble of proving a title. Both the late Lord Chancellor and Lord Cairns had supported measures for curing this defect by admitting to the register less perfect titles, and Lord Selborne had gone so far as to propose that after a certain date every transfer of land should be accompanied by registration. By this gentle compulsion it was hoped that by degrees a complete register

The Judicature Bill completed.

Agricultural Holdings Bill.

Land Transfer Bill.

would be formed and the transfer of land rendered cheap and expeditious. Lord Cairns in his new Bill, while accepting the registration of titles less than absolute, dropped the compulsory part of Lord Selborne's Bill although he had previously supported it. Thus again the purely permissive character of the Bill went far to destroy its usefulness.

There was undoubtedly a crying evil in the wretched housing of the poor, especially in large cities. The terrible effect on the health of the people of overcrowding was only too evident. While 22 per thousand was the average death-rate in the country, in some parts of Manchester it rose as high as 67; while it was calculated that for every twelve children who lived and flourished in the better parts of London, in the worst parts only one survived. To remedy this evil Mr. Cross introduced a Bill for the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes. But again he guarded himself carefully from the charge of touching property. It was no business of the Government, he said, to supply citizens with prime necessities, it was not their business to encourage the charitable building of houses at less than the market rate. He took his stand entirely on the ground of health. Again he shrank from compulsion. Corporations of large cities were to be allowed to acquire by compulsory purchase buildings or land for the accommodation of the working classes; whether they would do so or not was left to the will of the Corporations. In the same way Sir Stafford Northcote's Friendly Societies Bill, intended to cure the evils of insolvency common in such associations, shrank from imposing compulsory supervision on the Societies, and was contented with placing opportunities in the way of the managers for having their arrangements examined. It was plain that while the Conservative Ministry felt considerable sympathy with the ills of the poorer classes, and looked upon social improvements as of more importance at the instant than political changes, they shrank from anything resembling Government interference with the existing lines into which society had fallen. On one point they took up a somewhat bolder position, and by their legislation added a new and important link to the series of measures for the improvement of the position of the workmen. By an Act for amending the labour laws a clear definition was given to what constituted a criminal breach of contract on the part of a workman. Malicious injury or the sudden desertion of employment which would, as in the case of gas or water supply, cause danger or injury to the public, were criminal. All

Labourers' Dwellings Bill.

Friendly Societies Bill.

Amendment of the Labour Laws.

other breaches of contract were henceforward to be treated by civil process. In the same way with regard to conspiracy: while the general law was left untouched, combination in trades disputes to do an act not in itself punishable as a crime ceased to be punishable as a conspiracy. Though some few of the workmen and their most extreme supporters still objected to the very light restrictions thus left on them, by the bulk of the artisan class the Bill was thankfully received.

But if the country was disappointed by the apparent mildness of the Conservative legislation in the first two years of Disraeli's Ministry, those who were watching in expectation for something of a more striking and theatrical character were soon destined to be gratified. It was suddenly made known that the English Government had purchased by telegraph the whole of the Khedive's interest in the Suez Canal at a cost of £4,000,000. There was a sort of grandeur about the proceeding which was held to consort well with the imaginative character of the Premier. By a sudden use of resources such as no other country could have wielded, without striking a blow, England was supposed to have checkmated its ill-wishers, especially the French, and to have secured command of the high-road to its Indian possession. It was supposed that something little short of an Egyptian protectorate was aimed at, it might be even the possession of Egypt. The great Eastern difficulty was thought to be solved. With Egypt and the Canal in our hands it would be possible to allow Turkey and Russia to settle their own affairs. The splendid stroke of statecraft dwindled indeed to comparatively small proportions when described in the singularly cold and matter-of-fact language adopted by Lord Derby. But for a while it filled the minds of thousands of Englishmen with a glow of national pride, and may be regarded as the beginning of that feeling of imperial self-assertion which is the distinguishing note of Mr. Disraeli's administration. Stripped of its political significance, it was yet a step of considerable importance, preventing as it did the absorption by one nation and one company of what should on all grounds remain an international highway. The Suez Canal, the great work of Lesseps, had been opened about six years. It had been constructed under great difficulties by a French Company, and with a scarcely covered opposition from the English. The expenses had been great, the dividends were slow in coming, and the Company had been obliged to increase the tolls enormously. The commercial value of the canal had been proved, and the English Government had thought it necessary to

Purchase of the
Suez Canal
shares.

interfere in the general interests of commerce. It was naturally a cause of some bitterness that the country which had opposed the great project should, when it had proved of immense advantage to its own interests, interfere politically with the interests of the French shareholders; and Lord Derby, to get rid of the jealousy engendered, had gone so far as to suggest to the French ambassador the idea that the Company should be bought out, and the canal placed in the hands of an International Commission. The idea was rejected by France, and there seemed a real danger that the whole canal would fall into French hands, and that English trade through it, more in amount as it was than that of all other nations put together, would be at the mercy of the French Company. For the financial affairs of the Khedive had fallen into much disorder, and to relieve himself from the pressure he was negotiating the sale of the 177,000 shares which he possessed, forming nearly the half of the whole capital of the Canal Company, to another French company. It was upon hearing of this that the English Government stepped in, and offered to purchase the Khedive's shares themselves. It was therefore a purely commercial transaction of a defensive character, and in no sense intended as the beginning of a new method of treating difficulties in the East. It was not however unnatural that a threatening meaning should have been attributed to it, for the signs of a coming storm were already visible in Turkey.

There was always a certain number of men engaged in public life whose attention was turned towards the state of the Empire in the East. The jealous feeling with which Russia was regarded was never entirely lulled, and as her conquests advanced in Central Asia and her frontiers drew nearer and nearer to those of British India, suspicion as to her ultimate designs grew stronger. In July 1875 the attention of Government had been called in the House to these advances; and although the Ministers could not be induced to give any expression of their opinion, Mr. Bourke, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had stated with some strength that the support of the independence of Afghanistan was a necessary part of our Indian policy, and seemed to indicate that should there be any appearance of a Russian approach upon Herat England would interfere. It was however the view of Government, a view supported by most of those well acquainted with the country, that the safety of the English dominion in India was chiefly secured by the *prestige* of the mother country. The belief that England was too strong to be attacked was held to be the surest

Fear of Russian
encroachment
in India.

means of checking any seditious feelings among the Indian people. With a view of bringing home to the Indian princes and the Indian people the reality of their connection with the great Imperial European

Prince of Wales's
visit to India.
Sept. 1875.

Power, it was thought desirable that the Prince of Wales should make a formal and ostentatious progress through India. A considerable sum of money was granted for this purpose, and the Prince's visit was carried out with all the surroundings of pomp which its intention seemed to require. A more political meaning was perhaps attributed to it than it deserved, for it took place just at the time when the European side of what is known as the Eastern question began again to rise into prominence, and was easily interpreted to carry with it an indication of the intention of the Government to assert to the full the position of the Empire in any coming difficulties which might arise. For events were taking place which brought the relations of Turkey with the rest of Europe into such prominence as almost to obliterate for several years any other subject of public interest, and aroused again in a considerable portion of the nation the latent dislike and mistrust of Russia which twenty years before had produced the Crimean war.

The policy of the Government of that time, ratified by the Treaty of Paris in 1856, had been to maintain the integrity and independence of the Turkish Empire as the best means of warding off the European war which the clash of interests following upon its dissolution would almost certainly have produced. But while maintaining the Empire and depriving the Czar even by force of arms of the exclusive protectorate of the Christian populations which previous events had given him, England and Europe had insisted upon such reforms as should remove the real grievances which weighed upon the Christians in Turkey, and should save them from the constant oppression and ill-usage under which they suffered. That these reforms should be carried out was the indispensable condition of the European protection extended to the Porte. But Turkey had failed to make good its promises, and while England had somewhat supinely refrained from offering advice, and satisfied itself with giving an opinion when asked, the Russians, much more deeply interested in the condition of their co-religionists, had again entered upon that course of intrigue and that exertion of personal influence through their ambassador which the war of 1855 had been intended to check. When in the early part of 1875 the oppressive action of the Turkish tax-gatherers drove the inhabitants of Herzegovina and Bosnia to rebellion, a strong suspicion was created that the insurgents were not

Re-opening of
the Eastern
Question.

acting without the secret encouragement of Russia, and there was at least the certainty that that country could not look on unmoved at an event which proved how little the reforming promises of the Porte had been kept. Even from this point of view it appeared as though the Eastern question was again to be opened.

The international character of the question was much increased when the efforts of the Turks to suppress the insurrection proved too much for an exchequer weakened by lavish mismanagement, and the Porte was compelled to make authoritatively an arrangement with its creditors falling little short of a national bankruptcy (Oct. 1875). Again the preservation of Turkey in the face of its inherent weaknesses became a matter of European importance. If its collapse with all the attendant difficulties was to be averted, it seemed to be necessary that Europe should insist upon reforms, ^{European efforts to secure Turkish reform.} directed on the one side to such economy as should secure the national credit, and on the other to the removal of those causes of dissatisfaction which had brought the Government to the brink of insolvency. As far as its public conduct was concerned there was no apparent reason for charging Russia with a desire to take undue advantage of the opportunity afforded by the insurrection for the destruction of Turkey. The Government of the Czar was the first indeed to suggest the necessity of intervention, but refrained from any single-handed action, and appeared desirous to act honestly with the rest of the guaranteeing Powers. It was mainly through its instrumentality that the Montenegrins and the Servians, eager to support the insurrectionary movement against their suzerain, were kept from hasty action. The course which in the opinion of Russia and its allies it was necessary that Europe should take for the preservation of peace was formulated by the Austrian Chancellor, Count Andrassy, at the close of the year 1875, in a note which was circulated among the other Courts of Europe, and received general adhesion. The only sign that Russia was applying independent pressure to the Turks was the promulgation in December of a firman promising to remove the chief ^{Failure of the Andrassy Note.} grievances of the Christians. The Andrassy Note, which was in fact little more than a request that the promises already given should be carried out, was with some modifications accepted by the Porte. It seems probable that the Turkish Ministry believed that it could rely upon the jealousy with which England certainly regarded the advances of Russia, and that, as on former occasions, division of interest among the Powers would prevent con-

certed action. Its honesty was hardly put to the proof. The Andrassy Note unfortunately contained no substantial guarantee for the performance of its recommendations. The insurgents therefore refused to trust merely to the word of the Sultan, the value of which they had already by experience learned. Thus the first effort of European diplomacy proved a complete failure.

The insurrection continued its course, and as the threatening attitude of Montenegro and Servia required the presence on their frontier of much of the Turkish army, the attempts at its suppression were attended with so little result that the rebels were constantly encouraged to raise their terms. Other provinces began to be involved in it. In the beginning of May a movement took place in Bulgaria which appears to have been a somewhat hasty disclosure of a great general plot in which Servia was implicated. Religious feeling rose throughout the Empire. In a Mahomedan outbreak at Salonica, the consuls of France and Germany were murdered. The safety of Europeans in Constantinople was so imperilled that the ambassador thought it necessary to apply to Government for leave to summon the fleet to Besika Bay. In this situation of affairs fresh intervention appeared necessary. The Czar himself with his Chancellor Prince Gortschakoff met Bismarck and Andrassy, the Ministers of the German and Austrian Empires, at Berlin, and drew up a note in which it was hoped that all the European Powers would join. It was naturally of a stronger character than the abortive memorandum of Count Andrassy. Emphasising the entire failure of the Turks to keep their promises of reform, it demanded an armistice for two months, during which negotiations for peace should be opened. The terms of peace demanded included the withdrawal of the Turkish troops to certain fixed centres, the retention of arms by the Christians, and the relief and restoration of the refugees and oppressed insurgents, and insisted that the work of reconstitution should be carried out by a mixed commission of Christians and Mahomedans under the supervision of the delegates of the great Powers. Thus only, it was suggested, could the honesty of the good intentions of the Porte be guaranteed. The document closed with the distinct intimation that if satisfactory terms could not be arrived at within the period of the armistice, more efficacious measures, which could mean nothing but force, would be employed. It was here that the European concert which had hitherto prevailed showed signs of dissolution; accepted by France and Italy, the memorandum was rejected by the English Foreign

Failure of the
Berlin Note.

Office. The Government appears to have thought the terms unduly severe upon the Turks, and took umbrage at being required to accept a scheme on which it had not been previously consulted. The evidence of the constant presence of Russian intrigue, the obvious eagerness of the Russians to have recourse to coercion, had also begun to rouse the suspicious fears of England. Thus a second time the efforts of diplomacy failed.

Again following its usual policy, Turkey replied to the threats of coercion by a voluntary promise of reform. On this occasion the bid for independence was a large one. Amid the disintegration of the Empire, one man, Midhat Pasha, seems to have believed in the possibility of infusing new life into the decaying body by a complete constitutional change. Within a fortnight of the rejection of the Berlin note, a *coup d'état* was carried out in Constantinople under his management; Abdul Aziz the Sultan was deposed, and his successor induced to issue a declaration implying the popular source of his power, and promising large diminution in that personal expenditure which was eating up the finance of the country.

Turkish Coup
d'Etat.
May 30, 1876.

The change did not prove successful, and if it was intended in any way to attract the support of England, its result was immediately neutralised by tidings with regard to Bulgaria which reached England on the 23d of June. On that day letters in the *Daily News* giving a description of the horrors which had accompanied the suppression of the Bulgarian insurrection roused almost to fury the popular indignation of England. The Ministry refused to believe the accounts which had been received. Both Mr. Disraeli and Lord Derby declared in the strongest manner that they were vastly exaggerated. The question became one of party interest. The lukewarmness with which the Government regarded the Turkish misdoings became henceforward a chief point of assault. When in July an English agent, Mr. Baring, was despatched to make inquiries upon the spot, it appeared that after all scarcely any exaggeration had existed. To make head against the new insurrection it had been found necessary to arm and employ multitudes of volunteers and irregular Circassian troops. With these allies the Turks had been able before long to put down the insurrection, but not until the irregular levies, amenable to no discipline and fired with savage religious enthusiasm, had committed acts of the most fearful cruelty. That there had been some exaggeration was true, but enough remained to justify the outcry which had been raised. Brutal ill-usage of prisoners, incidents recalling in their horror the black hole of Calcutta, the destruction of not less than

The Bulgarian
Insurrection.

12,000 persons in the district of Philippopolis, and the carrying off to Turkish harems of at least eighty Christian girls, Mr. Baring's report asserted as facts; and worst of all he confirmed the terrible story to which the newspapers had given currency of a fearful massacre at Batak. Judging from the scene which met his eyes when weeks after the event he visited the spot, he was led to assert that there had been committed perhaps the most heinous crime which had stained the history of the present century. Nor could the Turkish Government avoid the charge of complicity, for the perpetrators of the atrocious deed, so far from being punished, had been publicly rewarded and decorated. The excitement in England was extreme, and found vent in crowded meetings denouncing the Turks and calling upon the Government to make common cause against them. In Parliament frequent motions were made tending in the same direction. But there Disraeli took his stand upon that ground which he had been already preparing, by the addition to the titles of the Queen of that of Empress of India, by the visit of the Prince of Wales to the East, and by the purchase of the Suez Canal shares. All his policy he declared had been directed not to the support of the Turks for whom we were not responsible, but to uphold and protect the English Empire. He concluded his last great speech in the House of Commons with these words: "What may be the fate of the Eastern part of Europe it would be arrogant for me to speculate upon. But I am sure that as long as England is ruled by English parties who understand the principles on which our Empire is founded, our influence in that part of the world can never be looked upon with indifference. The present is a state of affairs which requires the most vigilant examination, and the most careful management. But those who suppose that England ever would uphold or at this moment particularly is upholding Turkey, from blind superstition, and from a want of sympathy with the highest aspirations of humanity, are deceived. What our duty is at this critical moment is to maintain the Empire of England. Nor will we ever agree to any step, though it may obtain for a moment comparative quiet and a false prosperity, that hazards the existence of that Empire." With this characteristic declaration of imperial views, of the indissoluble connection of England with the East, and of ill-concealed distrust of Russia, Mr. Disraeli closed his Parliamentary career and passed into the quieter life of the Upper House with the title of the Earl of Beaconsfield (August 1876).

If the dread of the increase of Russian influence in the East was a reasonable feeling, there was much cause for its predominance at this

moment. For in June the ambitious Prince of Serbia, in conjunction with the Montenegrins, had plunged into open war with Turkey, in defiance of the remonstrances of England, but with an army largely composed of Russian volunteers, and led by the Russian general Tchernayeff. Lord Derby had made it distinctly understood that if the Prince chose to go to war he must abide the consequences. He was everywhere defeated, and by September was driven to demand, what after the warning he had no right to expect, the mediation of foreign Powers. The intervention of Europe had now become more difficult. It was no longer the pacification of insurgent provinces by conciliatory reforms which it was bound to demand, it was a power victorious in the open field with which it had to treat. The different views of England and Russia upon the right of intervention, and the method in which it should be employed, became henceforward more constantly obvious. Yet Lord Derby did not entirely refuse, as his former declaration would seem to indicate that he ought to have done, to intervene further in the quarrel. He joined in pressing an armistice upon the Porte, at the same time mentioning certain bases of negotiation, and suggesting a general Conference. A distinct declaration of the independence and integrity of the Turkish Empire, the *status quo* with regard to Serbia and Montenegro, and a protocol publicly signed in the presence of the representatives of the Powers, insuring local self-government to the insurgent provinces appeared to him to meet the requirements of the case. But the triumphant Turks were not inclined at present to listen to such terms. They offered to treat, but their terms were high, and they refused to grant more than a suspension of hostilities. To the great displeasure of the English Government, Prince Milan refused anything less than an armistice; his refusal was supported by Russia, Russian volunteers still crowded to his standard, and the war recommenced. Again it was disastrous to the Servians. But the Russians were now almost avowedly supporting Prince Milan. In September they suggested to Austria a joint occupation of Turkey, and the advance of the fleets into the Bosphorus. Unable to resist their pressure the Turks promulgated a fresh scheme of reform, and offered an armistice for six months. Again the English Foreign Office accepted the Turkish view, but Russia, alleging that so long an armistice would be injurious to the Servian cause, determined to rescue Serbia from its difficulties, and, in order to prevent the Turks from carrying out their own reconstruction, suddenly forced upon them an ultimatum limiting the armistice

War between
Serbia and
Turkey.

European
attempts for
peace.

to six weeks. Yet although the divergence of views between the two Courts had become so obvious, the Czar had hitherto taken every opportunity to allay English mistrust. He had offered, should the naval demonstration prove sufficient, to waive all demands for the occupation of Turkey, and had declared that he had no views on Constantinople. He had explained that any occupation which might be necessary should be only temporary. He had gone out of his way to have a message of friendship conveyed to the English people. With the rest of Europe he had consented to a Conference to be held at Constantinople. And in spite of an utterance of the English Prime Minister at the Lord Mayor's dinner which seemed to presage war, and an answer to the challenge couched in the same tone by the Czar in a speech at Moscow, there seemed in the coming Conference some hope of averting an open breach. But the Conference was a failure. There was no division among the representatives of the Powers, nor did they exhibit any undue obstinacy. It was the Turks themselves who, firm in their determination to act independently and not at dictation, ruined it. Preliminary meetings without the presence of the Turkish representatives had settled the terms which the Powers demanded, and which were based upon the suggestions of Lord Derby. But once again the Turks attempted the same manœuvre they had already twice tried. The first public meeting was interrupted by the artillery announcing the promulgation of a new constitution for the Ottoman Empire with all the apparatus of ministries and assemblies and popular elections. Armed with this weapon the Turks opposed a polite refusal to all the arguments of the Powers, till one by one the demands which had been raised were set aside, and two only remained,—the appointment of Governors for five years with the approval of the Powers, and an international commission nominated by the Porte for the purpose of carrying out the reforms. These two points were laid before the Grand Council of the Ottoman Empire, and there with one dissentient voice rejected, upon the ground that the conditions required interfered with the independence of the Empire. When the rejection was notified to the plenipotentiaries, General Ignatieff declared that no further concession was possible, that the Conference must close, and further measures be resorted to.

The language with which Ignatieff had brought the Conference to a conclusion was very threatening, especially as troops had been for some time collecting in large numbers upon the northern frontier

Divergence of
English and
Russian views.

Failure of the
Conference at
Constantinople.
Jan. 1877.

of Turkey. But one further effort at a diplomatic solution of the question was made. Almost immediately after the Conference had closed, Prince Gortschakoff on the part of Russia circulated a despatch among the Powers for the purpose of discovering what the Cabinets proposed to do with a view of meeting the refusal of Turkey to accept the propositions made at the Conference, and of insuring the execution of the wishes of the Powers. After some exchange of communications and a personal visit by General Ignatieff to several of the Courts, the effort of the Russian Government resulted in a protocol signed in London on the 31st of March. This document—while taking notice of the peace which Turkey had made with Servia, its negotiations with Montenegro, and its promises to improve the condition of the Christian populations—declared the intention of the Powers to watch by means of their representatives and local agents the manner in which those promises were carried out. It then proceeded to declare that should they be again disappointed, and the questions left in the condition which periodically disturbed the peace of the East, the Powers would regard that state of affairs as incompatible with the interest of Europe, and would consider in common the means best fitted to secure the well-being of the Christians and the general peace. To this document were appended two declarations, the one by Lord Derby stating that if the object proposed, namely the reciprocal disarmament on the part of Russia and Turkey and peace between them, should not be obtained, the protocol should be regarded as null; the other by the Russian Minister Schouvaloff, demanding that if the Porte accepted the advice of Europe and was ready to make peace with Montenegro, to place its forces on a peace footing, and seriously to undertake reforms, it should send a special envoy to St. Petersburg to arrange for mutual disarmament, but added that any recurrence of massacres such as those of Bulgaria would at once put a stop to the measures for demobilisation. The Russian Government apparently considered the protocol as an ultimatum, the English Government intended it to allow the Turks one more chance. The Ministers of the Porte, unwisely in the opinion of the English Government, thought it necessary to send an answer to the protocol. They entirely repudiated it on several grounds. In attempting to act at all without the co-operation of the Porte the Powers had infringed the Treaty of Paris; the independence of the Empire as guaranteed by treaty, and recognised even so lately as at the Conference, was assaulted; the protocol demanded reforms applicable to the Christian populations only, whereas the

Last effort
for peace.

new constitution had guaranteed advantages to all classes and creeds; lastly, the language of the Russian declaration was in the highest degree offensive. The Turkish answer seemed to imply that war would be preferred to submission. "In the face of hostile suggestions," it concluded, "unmerited suspicions and manifest violations of her rights, violations which are at the same time violations of international law, Turkey feels that she is struggling at the present moment for her very existence."

Rejection of
the protocol
by Turkey.
April 10.

This answer, which reached England on the 12th of April, at once produced a crisis. On the 24th Russia, declaring that the protocol which was the last expression of the collective will of Europe had been answered by a fresh refusal on the part of the Porte, and thus that no hope was left of deference on its part to the wishes and counsels of Europe, announced that the Czar had undertaken single-handed to obtain by coercion that which the unanimous efforts of the Cabinets had been unable to obtain, and had given orders to his army to cross the frontiers of Turkey. He expressed his conviction that while fulfilling a duty imposed on him by the interests of Russia, he was at the same time responding to the interests of Europe. The event had happened which all along the English Government had most dreaded; Russia had undertaken single-handed to support the Christian interests in Turkey. Up to this time, although it must be confessed that the refusal of England to join in the Berlin memorandum somewhat shook the unity of their action, the Powers had been acting in concert in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty of Paris. The conduct of Russia could be easily construed into a repetition of that course of action which had excited so much indignation in 1871. The English Government at once appeared as the champion of the Treaty of Paris and the Declaration of London; and Lord Derby as its mouthpiece expressed his strong regret at the line which Russia had taken, as being entirely inconsistent with the spirit of those arrangements. Henceforward a suspicion with regard to Russian intentions began in the minds both of the Government and of a large portion of the nation to take the place of sympathy with the Christian populations. Every fresh success won by the Russian arms in their war with Turkey increased the feeling till it seemed rapidly ripening into a state of excitement incompatible with the maintenance of peace.

Meanwhile the voice of diplomacy was for a time silent amid the noise of open war. The forces of Russia appeared at first to sweep all

Russia under-
takes war
against Turkey.
April 24.

Change of feel-
ing in England.

opposition before them: the Danube was successfully crossed at the end of June, Bulgaria occupied and organised under a Russian Government, an army under General Gourko was pushed even across the Balkans, and all seemed to promise an immediate and easy march to Constantinople itself. But before long it appeared that the Turks were not to be so easily annihilated. For five months Osman Pasha in Plevna, some twenty miles south of the Danube, held his own against all the forces brought against him. Determined resistance upon the Schipka Pass rendered the passage of the Balkans long doubtful. It was not till 50,000 men had been sacrificed that the skill of General Todleben was successful in inclosing the troops at Plevna. Finally, on the 10th of December, its gallant defenders were driven to an unconditional surrender. But that obstacle once removed from their path, the Russians resumed their victorious advance. Already in Asia they had entirely broken the Turkish defence, and now in the depth of winter, while Gourko forced the Western Balkans, Scobelev and Radetsky cleared the Schipka Pass upon the east, and the two armies swept down into the plains of Roumelia. Conscious that their resources were exhausted, the Turks called for the mediation of Europe, and England accepted the duty. But a victorious Power does not readily admit interference in its progress; the Russian troops advanced nearer and nearer to the capital. It was by direct negotiations between the belligerents that an armistice was after some delay arranged (January 31), nor was it until the Russian troops were actually in possession of a portion of the seaboard and their headquarters advanced to San Stefano, that the preliminaries already arranged were brought into final form, and a peace concluded on the 3d of March.

The course of the war had been watched with feverish anxiety in England. The extent to which the Russians would claim to use the advantages they had won, and the degree to which England could allow free play to their demands without injury to its own interests, were the questions which divided the political parties of the day. To the Liberals it appeared that a frank and early recognition of the necessity of coercion for the purposes of securing the freedom of the Christians from Turkish misrule would have prevented any recourse to arms. Deprived of all hope of English assistance, they believed that Turkey would certainly have yielded. Even as things now were—while acknowledging that such an event as a Russian occupation of Constantinople would call for the inter-

Course of the
war.

Excitement in
England.

ference of Europe—they denied that it could be the duty of England alone to enter upon a war to prevent it, or to attempt to defeat Russia for the purpose of re-establishing Turkish misrule. To the Government and its as yet unbroken majority the interests of the Empire in the East and the assertion of the influence of the country, which they considered to have been set at nought by Russian action, seemed not unlikely to demand armed interference. Events so critical required an early meeting of Parliament, and the armistice was still unsigned when the Houses met on the 17th of January. The Queen's Speech acknowledged that the belligerents had not infringed the neutrality of England, and expressed a hope that the negotiations which had begun might terminate in a peace, but darkly hinted that unexpected events might occur which would render measures of precaution necessary, and consequently an appeal to the liberality of Parliament. The meaning of these words was soon disclosed, when the Government asked for a supplementary grant of £6,000,000 for the purposes of the army and navy. The Russians were still advancing towards Constantinople driving crowds of refugees before them, the terms of peace were still undeclared, and the Government thought it desirable that the wealth and determination of England should be clearly demonstrated, although, as at present advised, there was no intention of using the grant. The dispute on the subject was warm both within and without the House, and

Warlike measures of the Government.

there was plain indication of diversity of opinion even in the Cabinet itself. While the question of the grant was still pending, news arrived that the English fleet had been ordered to the Dardanelles, and was quickly followed by the resignation of Lord Carnarvon and Lord Derby. As the news proved to be false and the fleet had returned to Besika Bay, Lord Derby resumed office, but Lord Carnarvon, unable to agree in a threatening and warlike policy, finally withdrew from the Ministry. Outside the House the streets rang with a doggerel song, which supplied a party name which has since become historical; "We don't want to fight," said the burden of it, "but, by Jingo, if we do, we've got the ships, we've got the men, and we've got the money too." "Jingoism" became the distinctive name for the advocates of a self-asserting imperial policy. In spite of the strongest protests on the part of the Opposition, the £6,000,000 which was virtually a vote of credit to the Government was given by an overwhelming majority. As rumours spread that the Turks believing themselves deserted by the English were making common cause with

the Russians and conniving at their occupation of Constantinople, and as the terms of the armistice became known, things began to look still more warlike. The British fleet, without concert with the other Powers, and without a formal firman from the Porte, was brought up to the Sea of Marmora. Military and naval preparations were pushed on with zeal, ships were hurriedly put into commission, and reinforcements despatched to the Mediterranean fleet. It was announced that Lord Napier of Magdala had been chosen for the command of the army with Sir Garnet Wolseley as the chief of his staff.

The publication of the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano somewhat lessened the excitement; there was no mention of the occupation of Constantinople, or the appropriation of the Egyptian tribute, or any direct interference with what were spoken of as British interests. But though the immediate risk of war appeared to be postponed, a fresh difficulty arose. There were many things in the Treaty which were regarded as objectionable, and, true to his original position, Lord Derby insisted that according to the existing international law of Europe no nation could attempt to settle the Eastern question without the consent of the other European Powers. The Austrian Court had already suggested a Conference; indeed one ground on which Sir Stafford Northcote had pressed for the £6,000,000 was that it would increase the strength of England at such a meeting. Before that Conference Lord Derby demanded that the Treaty should be laid. The Russians naturally objected to have their hard-won advantages snatched from their hands. They would grant nothing further than that the separate nations should discuss at the Conference any stipulation which they considered injurious to themselves. As Lord Derby refused to yield upon this point, the hope of a Conference seemed to disappear. But the very same evening that this was known it was announced in the House that Lord Derby had again resigned. Upon his loyally refusing to state the reason, Lord Beaconsfield thought it right to declare that the resignation of his colleague arose from the decision of the Cabinet to make a still further exhibition of the determination of England by calling out the reserves. It subsequently appeared that this was by no means the whole of the truth: propositions had even been made and well received in the Cabinet to seize a port in Asia Minor without the leave of the Turks, and thus to guard our road to India. It would seem to have been the warlike and aggressive feeling which existed among the Ministers, rather than any specific act, which rendered the co-operation of Lord Derby with them im-

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Resignation of Lord Derby. March 28.

possible. His place was taken by Lord Salisbury, who marked his accession to office by a vigorous circular addressed to our representatives at foreign courts. In this document he reviewed the terms of the San Stefano Treaty, and arrived at the conclusion that they were of such a sort that neither the interests which England was specially bound to guard nor the well-being of the regions with which the Treaty dealt would be consulted by a Congress of the character proposed by the Russians. Before the debate upon calling out the reserves was concluded, the Budget was produced. It became apparent that more than half the vote of credit was already spent, and that the spending of the rest was in contemplation. Under these circumstances a deficit was a matter of course. It was to be supplied by an additional 2d. on the income-tax, and an increased duty on tobacco, and a million and a half would still be left to be paid in the coming year. The Government, which had spoken of the £6,000,000 as merely a sum to be held in hand for the purpose of affording it strength in its negotiations, had thus already made arrangements for spending nearly the whole of it, and was now demanding the still more distinctly warlike measure of calling out the reserves. Again the obedient Conservative majority voted as required, and then Parliament was dismissed for an unusually long holiday with an intimation from Sir Stafford Northcote that nothing had lately occurred in any way increasing the gravity of the position. It was a somewhat startling commentary upon this assertion when the morning after the adjournment news arrived that 7000 Indian troops had been summoned to Malta.

The policy of Government seemed to consist in a succession of surprises; no explanation had been forced from them during the late session, but step after step they had advanced by unexpected movements to the verge of war. Millions had been granted under a somewhat false pretence, the calling out of the reserves had been made known chiefly by the sudden resignation of a member of the Cabinet, and now Parliament had been sent off for its holiday to hear of a step, the legality of which was very questionable. Such a form of government was not pleasing to the nation. Though his united majority enabled the Prime Minister to act apparently in full security, signs were not wanting that the tide of his popularity was beginning to turn. Such elections as took place revealed the growing strength of the Liberal party. The employment of troops from India, an already recognised

Salisbury's
circular.
April 2.

Indian troops
summoned to
Malta.
April 17.

Discontent
caused by
Beaconsfield's
policy of
surprises.

part of the imperial system of Lord Beaconsfield, excited the profoundest discontent. The Government regarded the limitation of the number of troops, which always accompanies the Parliamentary grant for their payment, as applicable only to troops within the realm of Great Britain. Such a construction seemed to destroy entirely the constitutional restrictions on the power of the Crown; whatever the number fixed in England might be, the Crown by means of the Indian army—the number of which was unlimited—could at any time plunge the nation into war. Opposition however was useless; the resolution moved by Lord Hartington was defeated by a majority of 120 (May 23); and although the manner in which they were carried out was repulsive to the great bulk of Englishmen, the measures of the Cabinet had the virtue of being successful. Constantinople had not been occupied; the Treaty of San Stefano had been less stringent than might have been anticipated; and now Russia had consented to submit it to the consideration of the European Powers. The negotiations for the Congress which had been broken off were resumed, and it was determined that it should be held at Berlin. England had certainly won a great diplomatic triumph.

The Congress, which was opened on the 13th of June under the presidency of Prince Bismarck, was attended by the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the various Courts of Europe. It was thus ostensibly a meeting of first-rate importance. It proved to be little better than a sham. For already before the plenipotentiaries left England a private agreement had been contracted between Russia and England, specifying the modifications which England would require in the Treaty. It did not exclude the introduction of other changes by common consent, but, failing these, purported to be a mutual engagement by the plenipotentiaries of Russia and Great Britain as to their conduct in the Congress. True to their policy of secrecy and surprise the Government had fenced with questions put to them with regard to the existence of such a treaty, and caused it to be understood that it did not exist. When published in the *Globe*, which had got hold of it through official carelessness, they pursued the same course. But its truth could not long be denied, and it contained a curious revelation of the practical issue of the loud talking of the Tories. Lord Salisbury's circular had so severely handled the Treaty of San Stefano, as to cause the remark that if the divergence between England and Russia was so strong, the

The Berlin
Congress.
June 13.

Separate Treaty
with Russia.

Treaty could afford no common basis for agreement at all. It now appeared that with the exception of a few points the Treaty was not to be disputed. Of all the important stipulations which it included, the only one which was seriously modified was the creation of a single Principality of Bulgaria. The Anglo-Russian agreement insisted upon its division, and decided that the war indemnity should not be paid in land. On the other hand, the towns of Batoum and Kars, against the possession of which by Russia Lord Salisbury had urgently protested, were to remain in Russian hands, on the distinctly expressed understanding that the military importance of these towns need no longer be considered, since England had in a special manner undertaken the duty of preserving the Ottoman Empire. Thus the Tories found themselves, as was not unusual where Lord Beaconsfield was concerned, deserted, and so complete a change of front had been effected, that such approbation as the agreement met with came chiefly from the Liberal side. But even this did not close

Separate Treaty with Turkey.

the series of surprises. It shortly became known that, again before the meeting of the Congress, England had also contracted an agreement with Turkey, and had pledged itself to defend for all future time the Asiatic dominions of the Ottoman Empire by force of arms, in consideration of receiving the island of Cyprus which was to be handed over to Great Britain, the Sultan at the same time promising to carry out the reforms required by his ally. It was upon these two separate Treaties that the work of the Congress really hinged. Bulgaria was to be divided, the Northern Province to be left in independence with an elected Prince and army of its own, the Balkan was to form the boundary of Turkey, the Bulgarians in Roumelia south of the mountains were to be governed by a Hospodar nominated by the Sultan and the Powers. Roumania was to be deprived of a portion of Bessarabia receiving the Dobrudscha in exchange, Serbia and Montenegro were made independent with some territorial additions. Austria was allowed to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina with the duty of restoring order. Batoum and Kars were left to Russia; and Greece, which had eagerly joined the attack on Turkey hoping for considerable advantages, was left much as she was, with a slightly improved frontier.

The ambassadors returned from Berlin bringing as they declared "Peace with honour," and were received with acclamations of praise and satisfaction. Abroad, except perhaps in France, there was a chorus of approval of the masterly policy of Lord Beaconsfield,

whose work was universally regarded as securing a great triumph for England. If the policy was accepted as right there could be little doubt that the praise was deserved and the success complete. But in the eyes of the Liberal party, and indeed of the majority of the English nation, Lord Beaconsfield's policy, far from being accepted, was regarded as retrograde. Ignoring the complete change which the industrial and democratic growth of late years had produced, he was attempting to force England back into that position of European ascendancy which it had occupied sixty years before. With a total disregard of the increased sensibility of the public conscience, he declared that the maintenance of English interests—irrespective apparently of the justice on which they rested—was the sole object of an English statesman. The greatness of the Empire with a special reference to its Indian possessions was the first of those interests. The world had no right therefore to be surprised at the arrangements of the Treaty of Berlin. Although undoubtedly his followers had supposed that Lord Beaconsfield's intention was to protect the Ottoman Empire, he had himself again and again avowed that the measures taken had no such object, but were to preserve the Empire of England. The establishment under English protection of a Turkish Empire, however limited, accompanied as it was by the possession of Cyprus, fulfilled this object. The interests of England were not in the Premier's opinion involved in the independence of Servia, or the enforced retrocession by Roumania of a portion of Bessarabia, or the establishment of an independent Montenegro and Bulgaria. They required that Turkey should be of a certain strength, and therefore the aspirations of the Greeks were passed by unnoticed. They required that Turkey should be decently governed, and for that England made itself responsible. From this selfish point of view the Treaty appeared to be a complete success. It was successful also inasmuch as it was produced by a Congress before which the whole of the arrangements between the separate belligerents had been laid. The principle laid down in the Treaties of 1856 and 1871, on which England had taken her stand, was therefore upheld. But in thus arriving at a success which seemed to belong to a state of society which had almost passed away, Lord Beaconsfield had pursued methods as little in harmony with the prevailing feeling as were the objects which he had been seeking. He had given a severe blow to that confidence between the Ministry and Parliament, which had become traditional. Close secrecy and a reticence which at times fell little short of deception had marked the relation between the

Opinions as to Lord Beaconsfield's policy.

Cabinet and the Houses. A series of surprises had brought the nation to the brink of war. The authority of the Crown had been strained to a degree which in the eyes of many was unconstitutional, while the very success of his policy was of a nature to cause considerable alarm. It was impossible to avoid seeing with some dread the grave responsibilities which it entailed, or the risk of future complication in maintaining what the Premier himself spoke of as the ascendancy of England in Europe.

The point at which the over-eager desire to establish English influence was to produce disastrous results was already marked out. Even in the midst of the excitement of the Eastern Question, Lord Lawrence had made his voice heard for a while in strictures upon the policy pursued upon the North-West frontier of India.

The relations of the Indian Government with Afghanistan were always a matter of much anxiety. For years the gradual increase of Russian conquests in Central Asia had been a cause of uneasiness to many Indian statesmen; and there was a general agreement that it was desirable, in order to interpose an obstacle to that advance and to cover the frontiers of India, that Afghanistan should be maintained as an independent and friendly Power. The attempt to establish direct British influence at the Court of the Ameer had brought with it such a series of disasters in 1842 that all further efforts in that direction had been laid aside. Dost Mahomed after his restoration to power at the close of the Afghan war had proved on the whole faithful to England; he had bound himself by treaty in 1855 to be the friend of our friends, and the enemy of our enemies, and during the trying time of the Mutiny had succeeded in restraining his people from any active intervention to the prejudice of the English. He had appointed as his successor his third son Shere Ali. For five years the country was plunged in civil wars, but in 1868 Shere Ali succeeded in establishing himself upon the throne of Cabul. The period of disturbance coincided with the viceroyalty of Sir John Lawrence, whose consistent policy, sometimes slightly spoken of as masterly inactivity, consisted in holding entirely aloof from the dynastic quarrels of the Afghans, in the recognition of any Prince who either by force or by popular favour succeeded in establishing himself on the throne, and in attempting to cultivate the friendship of the Ameer by gifts of money and arms, while carefully avoiding topics of offence. Thus when Shere Ali became master of the country he received with the full consent of the Conservative Government a large payment in money

Policy of
England with
regard to
Afghanistan.

and a considerable present of arms and ammunition. Lord Lawrence was himself unable to meet the Ameer, but his successor, Lord Mayo, had an interview with him at Umballah in 1869. A strong love of independence and a desire to be left to their own devices were marked characteristics of the Afghans. The advance of Russia caused them much uneasiness, and they desired a complete alliance, offensive and defensive, with England. But at the same time they felt an extreme dislike to the presence of representatives of England within their boundaries, not unreasonably thinking that it would produce, as it had already once produced, disastrous results which might easily end in their loss of independence. The Ameer had also a personal object; he desired to obtain the British guarantee for the succession of Abdulla Jan, his favourite son. Lord Mayo adhered to the policy of his predecessor. He refused to enter into any close alliance, he refused to pledge himself to support any dynasty. But on the other hand he promised that he would not press for the admission of any English officers as Residents in Afghanistan. The return expected by England for this attitude of friendly non-interference was that every other foreign state, and especially Russia, should be forbidden to mix either directly or indirectly with the affairs of the country in which our interests were so closely involved. At a meeting at Simla in 1873 Lord Northbrook had declared afresh his adhesion to this line of policy. Meanwhile direct negotiations had been carried on with the Russians for the purpose of relieving the Ameer from danger from Central Asia, and in 1869 an understanding had been arrived at that Afghanistan should be excluded from the sphere of their Asiatic operations. The necessity of maintaining Afghanistan as a strong and independent but friendly state was thus fully accepted, and Viceroy after Viceroy, Indian Secretary after Indian Secretary, had accepted the policy by which that object should be obtained.

But a different view was held by another school of Indian politicians, and was supported by men of such eminence as Sir Bartle Frere and Sir Henry Rawlinson. Their view was known as the Sindh Policy as contrasted with that of the Punjab. It appeared to them desirable that English agents should be established at Quetta, Candahar, and Herat, if not at Cabul itself, to keep the Indian Government completely informed of the affairs of Afghanistan, and to maintain English influence in the country. In 1874, upon the accession of the Conservative Ministry, Sir Bartle Frere produced a memorandum in which this

Treaties with
Shere Ali
1869 and 1873.

Disastrous
change of policy
in 1874.

policy was ably maintained. The occupation of Quetta, and the construction of a railway to the Bolan Pass, even if necessary by the employment of force, formed part of his plan. The memorandum appears to have carried conviction to the mind of Lord Salisbury, although as Lord Cranborne he had fully concurred in the policy of preceding years. A despatch in January 1875 embodied his change of view. Lord Northbrook and his Council succeeded by remonstrances in postponing for a year any action in a new direction. But early in 1876 Lord Northbrook, disagreeing on the financial policy of India with the Secretary of State, brought upon himself a censure which induced him to resign. A Viceroy whose views were more in accordance with those of the Government, and who was likely to be a more ready instrument in his hands, was found in Lord Lytton, who went to India intrusted with the duty of giving effect to the new policy. He was instructed to find an excuse for despatching a temporary mission to Cabul, and with a view of rendering more definite the relations between the two countries to continue payments of money, to recognise the permanence of the existing dynasty, and to give a pledge of material support in case of unprovoked foreign aggression, but to insist on the acceptance of an English Resident at certain places in Afghanistan in exchange for these advantages. The policy thus indicated was fitted to produce all the evils against which previous Viceroys had guarded. The English Government undertook responsibilities which might easily involve it in hostilities brought on by events over which it could exercise no control. It pledged itself to support a prince who might be either too weak or too unpopular to establish his authority, and it insisted upon taking that step which of all others was the most irritating to the suspicious Afghans, and the most likely to drive them into a course of counter intrigue with Russia. Perhaps the worst feature of the proposed measures was the blow which they dealt to the high character for honour and honesty which the Indian Government had hitherto maintained. Lord Lawrence and those who thought with him in England prophesied from the first the disastrous results which would arise from the alienation of the Afghans. Shere Ali was a man of marked and peculiar character, and though capable at times of frank and even enthusiastic admiration, such as he had expressed for Lord Mayo, was inclined to allow what he considered as injuries to rankle in his mind. The suggestion of Lord Lytton that an English Commission should go to Cabul to discuss matters of common interest to the two Governments, was calculated further to excite feelings already somewhat unfriendly

to England. He rejected the mission, and formulated his grievances, which appeared to be certain interferences, perhaps unwise, on the part of Lord Northbrook, a hostile decision given by the arbitrators in his quarrel with Persia with regard to the Seistan boundary, the rejection of the Treaty of Alliance, and the refusal to recognise his successor.

Lord Lytton waived for a time the despatch of the mission, and consented to a meeting between the Minister of the Ameer and Sir Lewis Pelly at Peshawur. Far from producing concord the meeting resulted only in completing the alienation of the Ameer. The English Commissioner was instructed to declare that the one indispensable condition of the Treaty was the admission of an English representative within the limits of Afghanistan. The almost piteous request on the part of the Afghans for the relaxation of this demand proved unavailing, and the sudden death of the Ameer's envoy formed a good excuse for breaking off the negotiation. Lord Lytton treated the Ameer as incorrigible, gave him to understand that the English would proceed to secure their frontier without further reference to him, and withdrew his native agent from Cabul. While the relations between the two countries were in this uncomfortable condition, information reached India that a Russian mission had been received at Cabul. It was just at this time that the action of the Home Government seemed to be tending rapidly towards a war with Russia. Attention had been called in a threatening manner to the Indian resources of the Empire by the troops which had been brought to Malta, and Russia not unnaturally determined as a counter move to irritate us in India. The step formed an excellent excuse for giving effect to the frontier policy already determined upon. If, it was argued, the Afghans could receive a foreign mission at all they could receive an English mission. Moreover as the despatch of a mission from Russia was contrary to the engagements of that country, and its reception under existing circumstances wore an unfriendly aspect, Lord Lytton saw his way with some plausible justification to demand the reception at Cabul of an English embassy. He notified his intention to the Ameer, but without waiting for an answer selected Sir Neville Chamberlain as his envoy, and sent him forward with an escort of more than a thousand men, too large, as it was observed, for peace, too small for war. As a matter of course the mission was not admitted, and Major Cavagnari, who had gone forward to Ali Musjid to arrange for its reception, was compelled to withdraw. The circumstances of his rebuff were falsely

Lord Lytton insists on the reception of a Resident and a scientific frontier.

reported; it was said to have been accompanied by gross insult. Although this was absolutely untrue, an outcry was raised both in England and in India to the effect that it was impossible for the country to submit to such treatment, and that the punishment of the Ameer had become a matter of necessity. Troops were hastily collected upon the Indian frontier; and a curious light was thrown on what had been done by the assertion of the Premier at the Guildhall banquet that the object in view was the formation of a "scientific frontier;" in other words, throwing aside all former pretences, he declared that the policy of England was to make use of the opportunity offered for direct territorial aggression. The formation of this scientific frontier had long been an object with the Sindh school of politicians and soldiers. It meant the occupation of the upper side of the passes leading into the plain of India. The wisdom of such a change of frontier was more than questionable. The expense must have been an overwhelming burden upon the already overtaxed finance of India. The advanced points held must have been always subject to interference and assault from the wild and semi-independent tribes which would have surrounded them, the occupation of all the passes would have been impossible, and consequently the gateway to India would not have been closed, and the mountainous and rugged country which lay in front would have thrown great difficulties in the way of any combined defensive action. It was in the pursuit of this questionable object, and of the equally questionable plan of establishing English representatives and an intelligence department in Afghanistan, that the war was to be forced upon the Ameer.

As had been foreseen by all parties from the first, the English armies were entirely successful in their first advance. In three bodies —from Quetta towards Candahar under General Stewart, and towards Cabul by the Kuram Valley under General Roberts, and by the Kybur Pass under General Samuel Browne—the armies pressed forward and overcame all the terrible difficulties which lay in their way, in spite of the gallant resistance of the inhabitants, and fearful losses in the transport service. By the close of December Jellalabad was in the hands of Browne, the Shutargardan Pass had been surmounted by Roberts, and in January Stewart established himself in Candahar. When the resistance of his army proved ineffectual, Shere Ali had taken to flight, only to die. His refractory son Yakooob Khan was drawn from his prison and assumed the reins of government as regent. But in fact Afghanistan was fast falling back into anarchy; the tribes gave their allegiance practically

*Invasion of
Afghanistan.
November 1878.*

only to their own chiefs, and Ayoob Khan, the brother of Yakooob, reigned in Herat. To avoid the total disintegration of the country, which must have been followed by occupation unless it was to be left as a prey to the Russians, was the chief object of England. To obtain English assistance and to establish himself on the throne of Cabul was the object of Yakooob Khan; when, therefore, he appeared personally in May at the English camp at Gandamak, no great difficulty was found in completing a treaty. Yakooob readily granted the English demands, consenting to place his foreign relations under British control, and to accept British agencies. With considerably more reluctance, he allowed what was required for the rectification of the frontier to pass into English hands. He received in exchange a promise of support by the British Government, and an annual subsidy of £60,000. On the conclusion of the treaty the troops in the Jellalabad Valley withdrew within the new frontier, and Yakooob Khan was left to establish his authority as best he could at Cabul, whither in July Cavagnari with an escort of twenty-six troopers and eighty infantry betook himself.

*Treaty of
Gandamak.
May 26, 1879.*

Then was enacted again the sad story which preluded the first Afghan war. All the parts and scenes in the drama repeated themselves with curious uniformity—the English Resident with his little garrison trusting blindly to his capacity for influencing the Afghan mind, the puppet king without the power to make himself respected irritated by the constant presence of the Resident, the chiefs mutually distrustful and at one in nothing save their hatred of English interference, the people seething with anger against the infidel foreigner, a wild outbreak which the Ameer even had he wished it could not control, an attack upon the Residency and the complete destruction after a gallant but futile resistance of the Resident and his entire escort. Fortunately the extreme disaster of the previous war was avoided. The English troops which were withdrawn from the country were still within reach. The Candahar army which had scarcely left the city was at once recalled, a small force from the Kuram hurried forward and seized the Shutargardan Pass, and General Roberts hastened back from Simla to take the command. Disease had so weakened the forces holding the Kybur that they were unable at first to move, and now, as throughout this campaign, the difficulties of the transport were very great; 60,000 beasts of burden had been lost in the earlier advance, and much difficulty was found in supplying their place. But

*Murder of the
Resident and
the English in
Cabul. Sept.
1878.*

*Second invasion
of Afghanistan.
October 1879.*

about the 24th of September, three weeks after the outbreak, the Cabul field force under General Roberts was able to move. On the 5th of October it forced its way into the Logar Valley at Charassiab, and on the 12th General Roberts was able to make his formal entry into the city of Cabul. Declaring that in his mercy he would spare the city, he proceeded with his work of punishment. The Ameer was deposed, martial law was established, the disarmament of the people required under pain of death, and the country scoured to bring in for punishment those chiefly implicated in the late outbreak. While thus engaged in carrying out his work of retribution, the wave of insurrection closed behind the English general, communication through the Kuram Valley was cut off, and he was left to pass the winter with an army of some 8000 men connected with India only by the Kybur Pass. It was not to be a time of rest. The patriotic leaders had retired to Ghuznee, and there though undoubtedly for the most part seeking their own interests maintained a semblance of allegiance to the deposed Ameer. At the same time the troops and tribesmen in Kohistan refused to accept the British rule. Bodies of insurgent troops in the beginning of December advanced both from the north and south towards the capital. General Roberts with characteristic energy at once assumed the offensive, and attacked them near Urghandi, about twenty miles west of Cabul, while they were still separated. Though frequently checked and beaten, they proved too strong for his resources. He found it necessary to concentrate his troops in the Shirpoor cantonments, two miles from Cabul, and wait for reinforcements. He was there attacked again and again, but finally, on the 23d of December, succeeded in beating off his assailants and re-establishing his authority in Cabul. As yet in Candahar all was quiet, though rumours were occasionally heard of the movements of Ayoo Khan in Herat. During the winter the patriot leaders at Ghuznee, nominally upholding the authority of the late Ameer who had now been deported to India, continued to gather strength. There was every probability that they were contemplating a fresh general insurrection. They were known to be in communication with Ayoo Khan, and with a new and formidable personage who now made his appearance on the scene. This was Abdurahman, the nephew and rival of the late Shere Ali, who upon the defeat of his pretensions had sought refuge in Turkestan, and was supposed to be supported by the friendship of Russia. The expected attack did not take place, constant reinforcements had raised the Cabul army to 20,000, and rendered it too strong to be assailed.

It was not the intention of the English Government to maintain a lengthened occupation of the country, but it was impossible to withdraw and leave behind them the anarchy which their policy had created. They allowed it therefore to be understood that they were quite willing to retire if any chief could be found popular and powerful enough to hold his own upon the throne. Such an indication naturally tended only to increase the virulence of intrigue. In March, therefore, with a view of arriving at some conclusion, Mr. Lepel Griffin came to Cabul and superseded General Roberts in the management of political affairs. He announced the decision at which the English had arrived. As no powerful and accepted chief had arisen of sufficient importance to be intrusted with the government of the whole country, it was thought desirable to break up Afghanistan into a northern and southern province. As to the south the Government was still willing to recognise any Ameer of sufficient power except Yakoob Khan. The policy thus declared was carried out. A certain Shere Ali, a cousin of the late Ameer of the same name, was appointed Wali or Governor of Candahar. In the north signs were visible that the only possible successor to the throne of Cabul would be Abdurahman, who had met with a favourable reception there on his return from exile. The appointment of Shere Ali certainly fell short of satisfying the requirements of the English. He declared himself incapable of reigning alone, and demanded the continual presence of a British force. It was decided to intrust the duty of supporting this weak ruler to troops drawn from the Presidency of Bombay. The Bengal army under General Stewart was to march northwards, and, suppressing on the way the Ghuznee insurgents, was to join the Cabul army in a sort of triumphant return to Peshawur. The first part of the programme was carried out. General Stewart marched out of Candahar and encountered the enemy at Ahmed Khel, some twenty-three miles south of Ghuznee. Though in the course of the battle which ensued there were moments when success was doubtful, victory at length crowned the English arms, and General Stewart pressed on to Cabul where as senior officer he assumed the command. The second part of the plan was fated to be interrupted by a serious disaster which rendered it for a while uncertain whether the withdrawal of the troops from Afghanistan was possible.

As far as Cabul itself was concerned no difficulty arose. The Government in England at this time passed into new hands. Lord Hartington succeeded Lord Cranbrook at the India Office. Lord

*Desire of
the English to
withdraw from
Afghanistan.
March 1880.*

Lytton, knowing that his policy had been systematically opposed by the party now in power resigned, and Lord Ripon was appointed Viceroy. It was certain that immediate retreat would be the result of the change. But whatever policy was adopted it was impossible to leave Northern Afghanistan without a ruler, and there seemed no alternative but to continue the negotiations which Lord Lytton had already opened with Abdurahman. It was a strange conclusion to a war begun avowedly to check the influence of Russia that the English should thus be compelled to accept a Russian *protégé*. It was scarcely a less bitter comment on the policy pursued in order to establish English influence, that the new Ameer declared the hostility to England to be so strong that he must decline to accept any assistance from them, believing that their continued presence in the country could only be a source of difficulty to him. In spite of repeated victory the triumph of English arms was not rendered very obvious when all the stipulations of the Gandamak Treaty were withdrawn, when a pledge was given that no Resident should be forced upon the Ameer, and the great fortifications raised about Cabul were placed in his hands; while all that was required in exchange was his assistance to secure the retiring forces from difficulties during their retreat.

But even the withdrawal of the invading force with the appearance of unbroken strength and at its own time was not to be allowed. It was with the remnants only of an army that General Stewart marched to Peshawur. The pick of his troops were required to retrieve by a brilliant deed of arms a terrible disaster in the neighbourhood of Candahar, and to destroy the power of those followers of Yakooob and of Ayooob, who still maintained a patriotic attitude at Herat, and refused to submit quietly to the division of the Ameer'ship. Ayooob had always expressed his disapproval of his brother's friendship for the English, and had constantly refused to accept their overtures. Though little was known about him, rumours were afloat that he intended to advance upon Ghuznee, and join the insurgents there. At length about the middle of June his army started. It was believed that the movement was directed rather against the new Wali of Candahar than against the English, and to the native troops was chiefly intrusted the duty of opposing it, but it was thought necessary to support them by an English brigade under General Burrows. There was but little disquiet felt at Candahar at Ayooob's advance. The road from Herat to Farah was supposed to offer extraordinary difficulties. Ghuznee rather than Candahar was

The retreat
safely effected
from Cabul.

Disaster to
the Candahar
army.
July 1880.

thought to be the object of the march. But before the end of June Farah had been reached and it seemed plain that Candahar would be assaulted. It was determined to hold the Halmand river against him. As he advanced the natives and many of the important chiefs joined his standard; and when the whole of the Wali's troops deserted and went over to the enemy, General Burrows found it necessary to fall back to a ridge some forty-five miles from Candahar called Kush-y-Nakhud. There is a pass called Maiwand to the north of the high-road to Candahar, by which an army avoiding the position on the ridge might advance upon the city. On the 27th of July the Afghan troops were seen moving in the direction of this pass. In his attempt to stop them with his small force, numbering about 2500 men, General Burrows was disastrously defeated. With difficulty and with the loss of seven guns, about half the English troops returned to Candahar.

General Primrose, who was in command, had no choice but to strengthen the place, submit to an investment, and wait till he should be rescued. General Phayre at Quetta at once set to work to organise an army for this purpose. But delay in obtaining transport prevented him from advancing till assistance had arrived from another quarter. The troops at Cabul were on the point of withdrawing when the news of the disaster reached them. It was at once decided that the pick of the army under General Roberts should push forward to the beleaguered city, while General Stewart with the remainder should carry out the intended withdrawal. It resulted that the advancing troops had no base of operations, but were engaged in what is known as a march in the air. With about 10,000 fighting men and 8000 camp followers General Roberts brought to a successful issue his remarkable enterprise. Between the 8th and the 31st of August the expedition traversed with two halts a distance of 318 miles, and reached Candahar. He had however not only to relieve the garrison but to destroy the assailants. This task he effectually performed, falling upon the army of the Ameer and entirely dispersing it a short distance outside the city.

All those at all inclined to the forward policy clamoured for the maintenance of a British force in Candahar. But the Government firmly and decisively refused to consent to anything approaching to a permanent occupation. In their instructions to Lord Ripon they reiterated the often repeated arguments of the Liberals, the danger of being drawn on to further aggression, the constant irritation likely to arise from the presence

The garrison
at Candahar
rescued by
General
Roberts.
August.

The final with-
drawal from
Afghanistan.

of an English force, the absence of any real dread of immediate Russian advance, and the heavy expense which would be entailed upon the Indian exchequer. Lord Ripon was told to withdraw the troops as soon as a favourable opportunity should occur. General Roberts had at once returned to India after his victory, and a force sufficient for temporary occupation only was left under the command of General Hume to be withdrawn as soon as possible. On hearing the decision of the English, Abdurahman stated his intention of sending a Governor with an armed force to take over Candahar, and at the beginning of April General Hume began his homeward march. The struggle between Abdurahman and Ayoob continued for a while, and until it was over the English troops remained at Quetta. But when Abdurahman had been several times victorious over his rival and in October occupied Herat, it was thought safe to complete the evacuation, leaving Abdurahman for the time at least generally accepted as Ameer.

On the 25th of January 1878 Lord Carnarvon had stated the reasons which had induced him to leave the Cabinet. He had disagreed with the resolution for sending the fleet to the Dardanelles, and for demanding the supplementary vote of £6,000,000 for increasing the armament of the country.

Carnarvon's
views of
Imperialism.
Jan. 1878.

In the course of the year he took an opportunity to speak of what was known as imperialism. The imperialism of old times with its selfish disregard of all colonial interests had passed away, and a new form of imperialism which regarded as of vital importance the connection of the mother country with the colonies and devoted itself to cultivating their best interests had taken its place. But the exaggeration of this imperialism brought with it its own dangers. "It likes," he said, "to talk of the power of its armies, to flaunt its mercenary troops in the face of the world, to boast that it is in favour of a great not of a little England, to boast loudly of every extension of the frontier, to dress up the Queen of these realms in the costume of an Indian Empress." While therefore Lord Carnarvon thus deprecated the vulgar imperialism of the time, he felt deeply the necessity of supporting to its full the imperial position of England in a higher sense. It was with this view that while still Colonial Minister he had busied himself earnestly with the affairs of South Africa. Unfortunately the very evils which he deplored were not wholly absent from the schemes which he there set on foot.

The Colonies of South Africa were founded by Holland. They had passed into English hands; and the Dutch farmers, disliking the

English Government, had moved further inland. At this time besides the three English Colonies of Cape Town, Natal, and the lately formed Griqualand, there were two independent Dutch Republics,—the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal. Much of the white population even of the English Provinces was Dutch, and a still larger proportion consisted of reclaimed or half-reclaimed natives. Thus while among the white inhabitants themselves there was every opportunity for the exhibition of conflicting interests, there lay behind all disputes the question which invariably attends frontier settlements—the treatment of the native population. This difficulty had become prominent in the year 1873 and 1874, when the fear of treachery on the part of a chief of the name of Langalibalele located in Natal had driven the European inhabitants to unjustifiable violence. The tribe over which the chief had ruled had been scattered and driven from its territory, the chief himself brought to trial, and on most insufficient evidence sentenced to transportation. It was the persuasion that he was intriguing with external tribes which had excited the unreasoning fear of the colonists. For beyond the frontier there lay the Zulus, a remarkable nation, organised entirely upon a military system, and forming a great standing army under the despotic rule of their King Cetshwayo. Along the frontier of Natal the English preserved friendly relations with this threatening chief. But the Dutch Boers of the Transvaal, harsh and arbitrary in their treatment of natives, had already involved themselves in a war with a neighbouring potentate of the name of Secocoeni, and had got into disputes with Cetshwayo, which threatened to bring upon the European Colonies an indiscriminate assault. Lord Carnarvon had rectified in some degree the ill-treatment of Langalibalele. The Lieutenant-Governor who had banished him had been recalled, and after the reconstitution of the administration by Sir Garnet Wolseley who had been expressly despatched for the purpose, Sir Henry Bulwer had been appointed to the vacant place.

But Lord Carnarvon's views reached beyond local re-arrangement. The Confederation of Canada in which he had been largely concerned had proved successful, and he desired to apply the same cure to the difficulties of South Africa. To promote this object he had attempted to assemble a Conference of the various States, and had despatched as a semi-official agent Mr. Froude, the historian, to rouse a feeling in favour of his plan. He had encountered much resistance from the legislature of Cape Town. The idea of confederation found little favour in that

Difficulties in
South Africa.

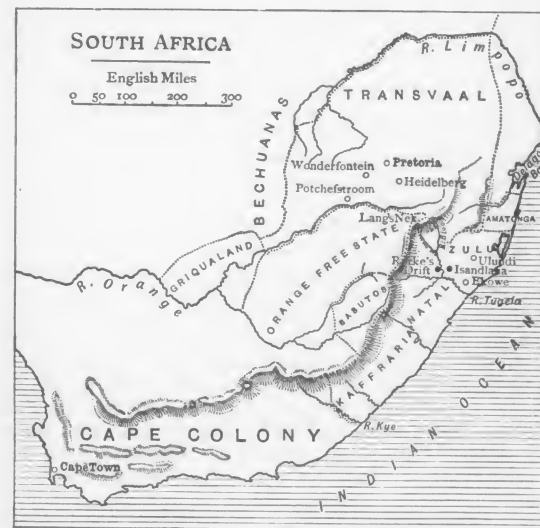
Carnarvon's
desire for
Confederation
of the South
African States.

colony; its ambitious object was centralisation, and the incorporation under itself of the various minor provinces. The difficulty of the situation was so obvious to the Colonial Minister that he had chosen as High Commissioner a man whose experience and energy he could thoroughly trust. Unfortunately in Sir Bartle Frere he had selected a man not only of great ability, but one who carried self-reliance and imperialist views to an extreme. He was destined to pursue in South Africa the same policy which he had recommended upon the Afghan frontier, and with results scarcely less disastrous. Determined in spite of the opposition he encountered to carry out the policy of confederation which he regarded as so hopeful, Lord Carnarvon in 1877 introduced a Bill not indeed insisting upon confederation, but laying down the framework of a constitution to which the Colonies at their own will might accede.

Before this Bill reached its second reading a strange event had occurred; one of the Provinces implicated had lost its independence; the Transvaal had been annexed to the British dominions. The danger caused by the reckless conduct of the Boers upon the frontier, and their proved incapacity to resist their native enemies, had made it a matter of the last importance that they should join the proposed Confederation, and thus be at once restrained and assisted by the central power. Sir Theophilus Shepstone had been charged with the duty of bringing the Transvaal Republic to consent to an arrangement of this sort. He found the strongest objection on the part of the people, and a bitter hostility against the British and their Government. Unable to persuade the Boers to accept his suggestions for an amicable arrangement, he proceeded, in virtue of powers intrusted to him, to declare the Republic annexed, and to take over the government. This high-handed act brought with it, as some of its critics in the House of Commons had prophesied, disastrous difficulties. Not only were the Boers themselves almost as a matter of course disaffected, but they handed over to the Imperial Government all their difficulties and hostilities. They were involved in disputes with both their barbarous neighbours. The disastrous result of their war with Secocoeni had been one of the chief arguments in favour of annexation. In 1875 they had made demands upon Cetshwayo, the most important of which was a rectification of frontier largely in their own favour. There was a hope that the more just and favourable treatment of native claims which might be expected from the English after the annexation would put an end to the profound mistrust felt by the African chiefs, and prevent them

Annexation of
the Transvaal.
April 1877.

from taking the law into their own hands. The arrangement of the disputed boundary with Cetshwayo afforded an opportunity of testing the soundness of this hope. Commissioners were appointed in 1878 to inquire into the rights of the case, the Blood River being taken for the time as the limit between the disputants. The Commissioners arrived at a unanimous decision against the Dutch claims, and Sir Henry Bulwer, who had all along regarded them as unjust, was of



opinion that the full and honest acceptance of this award would have been sufficient to allay the threatening irritation of the Zulus.

But before the Treaty could be carried out it required ratification from the High Commissioner, and it came back from his hands clogged with formidable conditions. Sir Bartle Frere held strong views as to the advantages of English influence, and the necessity of destroying the military organisation of the Zulus which he regarded as a constant

threat against our frontier. There were no doubt some causes for un-
 Sir Bartle Frere easiness. An outrage or two had been perpetrated by
 insists on Zulus within the limits of Natal, an English surveyor
 guarantees had been robbed, some missionaries declaring that they
 from the Zulus. were persecuted had withdrawn from the country. To Sir Bartle
 Frere these slight events appeared clear proofs of the overweening
 confidence and hostile intentions of Cetchwayo. While therefore he
 accepted the boundary report, he determined to make it an opportunity
 for the destruction of Cetchwayo's power. In December a Special
 Commission was despatched to meet the Zulu Envoys, to explain the
 award, but at the same time to demand corresponding guarantees
 from the King. When these were unfolded they appeared to be the
 abolition of his military system and the substitution of a system of
 tribal regiments approved by the British Government, the acceptance
 of a British Resident by whose advice he was to act, the protection
 of missionaries, and the payment of certain fines for irregularities
 committed by his subjects. These claims were thrown into the form
 of an ultimatum, and Cetchwayo was given thirty days to decide.
 All alternative, all explanation, all pacific means were excluded : it
 was to be submission or war. It proved to be war. Sir Bartle
 Frere had already prepared for this contingency ; he had detained in
 South Africa the troops which should have returned to England, and
 had applied to the Home Government for more. Although his request
 had been at first coldly received, the Government had yielded to his
 constant assertion of coming danger, and had in November despatched
 reinforcements, on the understanding that they should be used for
 defensive purposes only. When no advances came from the Zulu
 king, Lord Chelmsford was appointed to the command of the troops
 upon the frontier, and on the 12th, the very day on which the time
 allowed for the acceptance of the ultimatum expired, the frontier was
 crossed.

The invasion was directed towards Ulundi, the Zulu capital. While
 Colonel Wood moved from the Transvaal, Colonel Glynn crossed the
 river at Rorke's Drift and Colonel Pearson entered the country by
 the Lower Tugela nearer the sea. The intelligence department had
 supplied Lord Chelmsford with full details as to the strength of the
 Invasion of Zulus and their method of fighting. Experience gained
 Zululand. in the Dutch wars with the natives was also plentiful.
 Nevertheless the first step across the frontier produced a terrible
 disaster. The troops under the immediate command of Lord Chelms-
 ford encamped at Isandlana without any of the ordinary precautions,

and in a bad position. No steps were taken for striking the tents in
 case of attack, no trench was dug, nor were the wagons as is usual
 ranged round to form a laager. In this unprotected situation Lord
 Chelmsford, while himself advancing to reconnoitre, left two battalions
 of the 24th with some native allies under Colonel Pulleine, who were
 subsequently joined by a body of 3000 natives and a few Europeans
 under Colonel Durnford. The forces left in the camp were suddenly
 assaulted by the Zulus in overwhelming numbers and entirely de-
 stroyed. It was only the magnificent defence by Chard and Bromhead
 of the post and hospital at Rorke's Drift which prevented
 the victorious savages from pouring into Natal. Lord
 Chelmsford on returning from his advance hurried from
 the fearful scene of slaughter back to the frontier. For the moment
 all was panic ; an immediate irruption of the enemy was expected.
 But when it was found that Colonel Wood to the west could hold his
 own though only with much rough fighting, and that Colonel Pear-
 son, towards the mouth of the river, after a successful battle had
 occupied and held Ekowe, confidence was re-established. But the
 troops in Ekowe were cut off from all communication except by means
 of heliographic signals, and the interest of the war was for a while
 centred upon the beleaguered garrison. With extreme caution, in
 spite of the clamorous criticism levelled against him, Lord Chelmsford
 refused to move to its rescue till fully reinforced. Towards the end
 of March however it was known that the provisions were running
 low, and on the 29th an army of 6000 men again crossed the frontier.
 On this occasion there was no lack of precaution. Cavalry swept the
 sides of the advancing column, the troops slept in battle array in a
 hollow square around the laagered wagons ; and when, as they ap-
 proached the fortress, they were assaulted at Gingilovo
 their strong formation proved efficient against the wild
 Subsequent successes. April.
 bravery of their assailants, a complete victory was won,
 and the garrison at Ekowe rescued. A day or two earlier an even
 more reckless assault upon Colonel Wood's camp at Kambula was
 encountered with the same success. But for the re-establishment of
 the English *prestige* it was thought necessary to undertake a fresh
 invasion of the country ; reinforcements had now arrived, and with
 an army numbering in its three divisions 24,000 men Lord Chelms-
 ford proceeded to carry it out. During these events several attempts
 at peace had been made on the part of the Zulus. But their
 ambassadors were never, in the opinion of the English generals,
 sufficiently accredited to allow negotiations to be opened. Yet it

Disaster of
 Isandlana.
 Jan. 22, 1879.

would appear that Cetchwayo was really desirous of peace, according to his own account even the assault at Isandlana was an accident, and the two last great battles were the result of local efforts. At length in July properly authorised envoys came to the camp. Terms of submission were dictated to them, but as they were not at once accepted a final battle was fought resulting completely in favour of the English, who then occupied and burnt Ulundi, the Zulu capital.

As in Afghanistan so in Africa, the English had destroyed the strong native rule, and having created anarchy were called upon to find some means of reconstructing the government of the country. The General had quarrelled with Sir Henry Bulwer. Sir Bartle Frere

Sir Garnet Wolseley's settlement of the country, July 1879.

was required at the Cape. Sir Garnet Wolseley was therefore again sent out with full powers to effect a settlement. His first business was to capture the King.

When this was done he proceeded to divide Zululand into thirteen districts, each under a separate chief; the military system was destroyed; the people were disarmed and no importation of arms allowed; a Resident was to decide disputes in which British subjects were involved. The reception of missionaries against the will of the people was not however insisted on. The feeling of the Colonists—excited by the war—was not in favour of this settlement. They talked largely of annexation and the opening up of fresh land for emigration. The Government however maintained their position, believing that they had thus destroyed the Zulu power, and yet avoided the difficulties and expenses attending an extension of the empire.

But the Zulu war had been after all but an episode in the questions which were agitating South Africa. The success of the policy which dictated the annexation of the Transvaal, and recommended Confederation was still uncertain. The conduct of the Boers during the Zulu war had not been altogether friendly. The necessity of over-awing the disaffection in the Transvaal had influenced the movements

Difficulties in the Transvaal. of the armies in the advance to Ulundi. At great meetings, especially one at Wonderfontein, the farmers had pledged themselves to continue to seek independence. To Sir Bartle Frere they had openly intrusted a strong protest to lay before the Government; but neither he nor Sir Garnet Wolseley who succeeded him held out the smallest hopes that the annexation would be reversed. The creation of a Legislative Council in the place of their old assembly, the Volksraad, was regarded by the Boers as a breach of the promises made to them on their annexation, and added fresh fuel to the disaffection which was visible throughout the

year 1879. The taxes which continued to be levied were paid under protest. Negotiations were continually carried on both at the Cape and in England for the restoration of independence, and at length in December, at another great meeting, which was recognised as a fairly representative assembly, the Boer farmers came to definite resolutions. They claimed the restoration of independent government and the re-establishment of the old Volksraad; but they were willing to intrust that body with the duty of making arrangements for the peaceful settlement of the difficulty, even at the price of some limitation on their independence. They were willing to allow the presence of an English Resident, to submit their quarrels with the natives to English arbitration, to adopt towards the natives the same general policy as that pursued by the English provinces, and even—although they made the concession very unwillingly—to enter into confederation. The meeting proceeded to pass resolutions against intercourse with the English and attendance at the Law Courts, and established a Volksraad with Pretorius as President to carry out this programme.

It was alleged at the time that a majority well inclined to accept the English rule were coerced by a violent minority, and that the party of independence rested its hopes of success upon strong expressions of opinion made by the Liberal candidates, especially by Mr. Gladstone, during the elections which led to the restoration of the Liberal party. But on the first point it would seem certain that, whatever may have been the views of the English settlers, the Boers as a whole had never accepted willingly the English government, and that the information sent to England describing their friendly attitude had been entirely misleading. On the other hand, the Ministry whether Conservative or Liberal could scarcely avoid recognising that it had undertaken the responsibility of supporting the interests of the English in the Colony, of those Boers who had been, as it was called, loyal, and of the natives. The Liberal Government was thus prevented from at once reversing the policy of its predecessors. Its object was to arrive at some peaceful and satisfactory solution, by which separate and independent government should be restored to the Boers and yet the interests of the English party respected. Such a solution was not to be arrived at. The declaration of Mr. Gladstone that he felt it his duty to maintain the annexation was received with bitter disappointment. The attitude of protest gradually ripened into serious disorder. The forcible resistance to a sale, to meet the taxes which a certain Boer in the neighbourhood of Potchefstroom had refused to pay,

The Liberal Government maintain the annexation of the Transvaal.

called for the presence of the military. Another great meeting was summoned, and in December 1880 the revolt broke out, and the flag of the Republic was hoisted at Heidelberg. Major Clarke and fifty soldiers defending the Courthouse in Potchefstroom were forced to surrender. A detachment of 250 men were fallen upon and defeated, with the loss of nearly half their number. Sir George Colley, the Governor of Natal, was obliged to undertake an invasion of the country. With a force too small for the purpose, and without waiting for reinforcements, he came upon the enemy at Langsnek, was beaten back in an assault upon the position, and when in February he attempted to turn it by occupying the Majuba Hill, the detachment he commanded was disastrously beaten and himself killed. The determination of the Boers to resist was obvious. Another instance was afforded of the difficulty of annexation and of the evils it entails; and the Liberal Government then in power thought it wiser, in spite of the clamour of their opponents, to give back their liberty to the Boers of the Transvaal, reserving only the sovereignty of the Queen, and a certain control over the foreign relations of the Republic. The project of Confederation was equally unsuccessful. Resolutions in its favour moved by Mr. Sprigg, the Prime Minister of Cape Town, found so little favour in the Assembly that they had to be withdrawn and the project dropped.

The foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield's Government, which led it to attempt to extend English influence, and to support what it considered English interests regardless of the responsibilities which such a course entailed, was further illustrated in Egypt. Ismail, the Khedive of Egypt, was a remarkable man, large and comprehensive in his views, speculative and lavish in the management of his finances, with an eager desire to bring his country within the limits of European politics, but governed wholly by a sense of personal interest and entirely regardless of the wellbeing of his subjects. The position of Egypt, lying on the highway to India and rendered more important by the creation of the Suez Canal, would have made the condition of the country of necessity an object of interest to Englishmen, even though the large share they had taken in the financial speculations of the ruler had not connected them with it by the strongest pecuniary ties. To a Government with the avowed views of that at the time in office, the interests of the bondholders were in themselves an important consideration. The establishment in the country of a paramount influence, to which a door seemed open through

Defeat of the
English at
Majuba Hill.
Feb. 1881.

Restoration of
the Transvaal.
March 1881.

English policy
in Egypt.

its financial difficulties, was a still greater object to Ministers who laid such stress on the imperial position of England in the East. Already, in 1875, English interference had checked the ambitious designs of the Khedive in Abyssinia and in Zanzibar, and the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, though it was not the great stroke of statecraft which it was at the time supposed to be, of necessity drew with it still closer relations with Egypt. The national insolvency of Turkey had been a large factor in producing the late war; a similar financial condition in Egypt might not improbably have produced a similar result. Mr. Cave was therefore sent out at the Khedive's own request, in 1875, to supervise the embarrassed accounts. His report, which was received in the following spring, at all events placed in a clear light what the difficulties of the country were. He pointed out as their cause the vast and hasty expenditure on public works, emphasised the result of reckless finance in the oppression of the poorer classes of Egyptians, and suggested that the only cure was the appointment of a trusted Minister, a European, as the head of a control department. Financially and politically the French were almost equally interested with the English in the prosperity of Egypt; in autumn therefore Mr. Goschen and M. Joubert were sent out as representatives of the bondholders to attempt to bring order into the finances. The reforms which they recommended and forced upon the Khedive were of a most trenchant character. About half the income was appropriated to meet the public debt; and the management of the revenue was placed almost entirely in European, and chiefly in English, hands. During the year 1877 this plan continued in operation, but its success did not appear sufficient, and in 1878 a new commission of inquiry at the head of which was Mr. Rivers Wilson was established. It advised still more stringent measures than those hitherto adopted. It imposed on the Princes of the Khedive's family the necessity of surrendering their estates for the public service, and at length induced the Khedive—with a declaration that his country was no longer African but a part of Europe—to accept, ostensibly at least, the position of a constitutional monarch. He appointed as his chief responsible ministers Nubar Pasha and Mr. Rivers Wilson. But the gradual concentration of power in English hands, coupled with the occupation of Cyprus, had excited the alarm of the French. They insisted upon having a representative in the Ministry, and M. de Blignières who had already been very serviceable under Mr. Goschen's arrangements was made Minister of Public Works. Thus the policy of Lord Beaconsfield

Gradual
establishment
of English
influence.

was beginning to bear fruit; the jealousy of France was excited, and England had become largely responsible for the good government of Egypt.

The Khedive, however, though he had appeared to acquiesce in the arrangements made, had his own views as to the meaning of the constitutional position he had assumed, and saw with apprehension the coil of European influence gradually tightening round him. He refused to submit to be a puppet in the hands of his three ministers, and taking advantage of a movement among the officers of the army, whose arrears were unpaid, drove Nubar from office in February, and demanded the right of being present at every Cabinet Council. Yielding to the pressure of the English and French Governments he accepted a sort of compromise. His son Tewfik was made President of the Council, but the absolute right of laying a veto upon every measure proposed was given to his English and French Ministers. The English Government appeared to be thus plunging still further into the responsibilities of Egyptian rule. But the struggle of the Khedive was not yet over. In less than a month he dismissed Tewfik and the ministers by a sudden *coup d'état* and established a wholly native Ministry under Cheriff Pasha. A national party, which was again to be heard of in a much more serious manner, was thus called into existence. But for the present it was easily suppressed. England and France indeed seemed inclined to accept the change, but Germany treating the matter as one of international concern interposed. The other Powers followed its lead and compelled Ismail to abdicate, placing Tewfik on the throne. The international character of the question which this crisis had exhibited seemed as if it might for a time entirely thwart the policy of the Western Powers. But after much negotiation the superior interest of France and England in the country was allowed, and by the consent of Europe a joint control under an English and French Minister was established, with power of inquiry into all branches of the public service, with seats in the Cabinet, and irremovable without consent of their respective Governments. It was thus in some degree as the agents of Europe, but with all the difficulties which had to be encountered placed upon their shoulders, that at the close of the Conservative Ministry England and France were undertaking the duty of managing Egyptian affairs.

From a Government which had come into office chiefly for the purpose of reversing what they considered the worrying policy of the

Efforts of the Khedive to shake off foreign influence.

Egypt put under the joint control of England and France.

last Ministry no important or sweeping domestic measures were to be expected. The country, used to the wide reforming measures of Mr. Gladstone, might have felt disappointed at the small measures of the present Cabinet had not its attention been almost entirely devoted to foreign affairs. But the determination of Government to restrict its domestic legislation to small measures of detailed improvement, while infusing into our foreign relations an unaccustomed spirit of self-assertion, had produced its natural results. The country was kept in a ferment by clamorous assaults upon Bulgarian atrocities; or by never-ending disputes—endless because they rested upon opinion only—as to the aggressive intentions of Russia; or different views as to the legal and constitutional aspects of the employment of the Indian army in European warfare; or the wisdom, if war was to be avoided, of placing in the hands of so self-asserting a Ministry a vote of credit for £6,000,000; or the justice or injustice of forcing half-civilised nations into war for the sake of establishing English influence, of insisting upon British Residents, or of acquiring scientific frontiers. It was not likely that in the midst of such heated discussion much time would be found for wide progressive measures affecting the political and social wellbeing of the English people.

Yet though the Parliamentary history of the time is singularly meagre in respect of great legislation, it was marked by events more important perhaps in their general effects than many great constitutional alterations have been, and to all appearance forcing on a change to be rather spoken of as revolutionary and structural than constitutional. For it is full of the rise and partial triumph of those obstructive tactics on the part of the Irish members which resulted, as they were intended to result, in throwing discredit upon the British Parliament, and, going hand in hand with the growth of Nationalist and Agrarian discontent in Ireland, forced into overwhelming prominence that part of the British dominions, and brought within measurable distance a system of divided Parliaments or Home Rule. There were fifty-one Irish members in the Parliament of 1874 who were avowed supporters of the principle of Home Rule. In the earlier sessions they accepted as their leader Mr. Butt, and subsequently Mr. Shaw. These men distinctly repudiated all idea of separation or of repealing the Act of Union, but they desired a separate Parliament for Irish affairs, taking their stand chiefly on the impossibility of the Imperial Parliament finding time to give proper attention to the wants of

Interest absorbed in foreign affairs.

Rise of obstruction in Parliament.

Ireland, or possessing sufficient knowledge of its requirements to listen with intelligence and sympathy to the demands of its representatives. But they sought their object by legitimate and old-fashioned Parliamentary means. It was not so with the younger and more eager men who, before this Parliament was dissolved, had pushed them from their seats and taken to themselves the leadership of the Irish party. Of these avowedly the leader was Mr. Parnell, a Protestant of English education, and unlike the greater part of Irish orators of a singularly cool and unimpassioned nature. He numbered among his faithful supporters Mr O'Donnell, Mr O'Connor Power, a man of education and real eloquence, and Mr. Biggar, a Belfast merchant, gifted at least with matchless effrontery which no amount of ridicule or disapprobation could abash. It was little thought when this party first entered upon their policy of obstruction, with the avowed object of throwing difficulties in the way of all legislation till Irish questions received what they considered a fair amount of attention, or of forcing the confession that one Parliament was incapable of grappling with the business of both countries, that their manœuvres would lead them to the verge of success. Disowned by the majority of their own party, repudiated by the acknowledged Home Rule leader, they excited at first feelings only of ridicule and vexation at their wearisome obstinacy.

The Irish party, strong as they believed in numbers, were disappointed in their hopes of influencing politics in the House. During the years 1874 and 1875 they had maintained an attitude of somewhat sulky isolation. It was perhaps this apparent failure of their Parliamentary tactics, this apparent want of energy on the part of their leader, which encouraged the small band of obstructives in their first movements. And perhaps to this may be traced the burst of Irish energy which marked the session of 1876. It seemed impossible that time should be found for the number of Irish bills of which notice was given, but, by an ingenious use of the machinery of the House by putting down the same bill in the names of different members, the Irish contrived to get hold of nearly all the Tuesdays and Wednesdays during the session. Some of these bills were of real interest. The Land Act of 1870 was upon its trial. It had been evident that means of evading its action had been found, and Mr. Butt moved a Bill for its amendment, which was intended to render free sale of tenant right absolute, to prevent large holders from contracting themselves out of the action of the law, and to deprive landlords of the arbitrary power

Activity of the
Irish Members
in 1876.

of eviction. The division showed how completely the two great parties of the country were at one in their opposition to the Home Rule movement. Only fifty-six members voted in favour of the Bill. Nor when Mr. Butt moved in a more direct manner the question of Home Rule, demanding an inquiry into the condition and wants of the Irish Government, could he rally more than sixty-one votes in his favour. But when the Irish, throwing aside their separatist tendencies, made their demands rest upon the equal treatment of the two countries the result was very different. Two attempts to equalise the one the municipal the other the borough franchise in England and Ireland were received with comparative approbation. In the one case the Government defeated the motion which was moved by Major O'Gorman by twenty-eight votes, in the other by a majority of thirteen only. Indeed the strong feeling that the wishes of Ireland must be attended to produced a more striking result even than this. Supported by Mr. Gladstone and the whole weight of the Liberal party, the motion for closing public-houses on Sunday was carried against the Government by fifty-seven votes.

Meanwhile in Ireland itself the discontent of the tenant farmers was by no means assuaged; party spirit exhibited itself in fierce riots at Belfast; and dissatisfaction with the gentle leading of Mr. Butt, producing bitter recriminations between himself and Mr. Smyth the leader of the Nationalists, became more and more evident. The little knot of obstructives in the House continued therefore in spite of want of sympathy from their own party to pursue the tactics they intended to pursue, and Mr. Biggar especially had made himself notorious by the unprecedented length of his pointless speeches. He and his friends began to be regarded in Ireland as the truer representatives of the national aspirations. In 1877 their action brought on a crisis. They did not confine themselves to speaking upon Irish measures, and when on Monday the 2d of July a vote for the Army Reserve Force came on in Committee, Mr. O'Connor Power intervened with a motion for reporting progress. He had but eight followers, yet in face of an overwhelming majority this small band insisted upon driving the House again and again to a division. It was not till seventeen such divisions had been taken that at a quarter past seven on Tuesday morning the House was counted out. Conduct of the same sort characterised a debate on the 25th of July upon the motion for going into Committee upon the South Africa Bill. The Chancellor of the

Obstructive
scenes in
Parliament.

Exchequer thought it necessary to move that Mr. Parnell should be suspended from the service of the House for two days, for having wilfully and persistently obstructed public business; and on the 27th he went still further, and submitted two new rules of procedure, by which when any member was declared to be out of order or to have disregarded the authority of the chair, a motion might be put without debate that he be not heard during the remainder of the debate, and, secondly, that no member should move for the report of progress, or that the Speaker do leave the chair, twice in the same Committee. Tenacious as Parliament has ever been of its rules and of the rights of minorities, it was so exasperated with the conduct of the obstructives that the resolutions encountered the opposition of only seven members. But Mr. Parnell and his friends were not inclined to submit. On the 31st, again on the South Africa Bill, they contrived to keep the House in continuous sitting for twenty-six hours. Government constantly refused to give way to the motions for adjournment, and it became a question of physical endurance. Chairman after Chairman was called on to preside, relays of members relieved those worn out in the struggle, and it was not till Sir Stafford Northcote threw out at length a hint that he should proceed to put his rules into execution that the obstructives yielded. Again on the 12th of April 1878 a wild scene took place in the House. The Earl of Leitrim had been barbarously murdered; and Mr. O'Donnell thought fit by way of excuse to make a violent attack upon his character. So great was the scandal that it was thought more decent to clear the House of strangers. During the secret sitting some of the Irish members, shocked at the conduct of their colleagues, accused Mr. O'Donnell and Mr. Parnell of endeavouring to found a reputation on apologies for assassination. A storm of recrimination of the most violent character ensued and kept the House in disorder for three hours. The incident marks a complete break-up of the existing Home Rule party. Disgusted at the indecent violence of his followers, Mr. Butt withdrew from the leadership.

The obstruction once fairly afloat continued in spite of the new rules to interrupt the course of business for the whole duration of this Parliament. It indeed proved contagious; on one occasion at least the more advanced Liberals did not fall short of the Irish in obstinacy. In 1879 a Bill was introduced for regulating the discipline of the army. It had been long felt that there were anomalies in the methods of military justice which required correction. The last Ministry had themselves undertaken the duty of producing a regular military code.

The Bill had been drafted and carefully revised, and now after a fresh revision might be supposed to represent the wishes of both parties upon the subject. It was accordingly supported not only by the Government but by the regular Opposition, and though the unpopular idea had been spread that it was intended to increase the power of the Crown, for some days its clauses were briefly discussed and passed with businesslike rapidity. But before long the question of the use of flogging in the army introduced a bitter element of strife. Amendments of all sorts were brought in, limiting the number of lashes, changing the word lashes to stripes, defining the character of the instrument with which they should be inflicted, and urging the total abolition of the punishment. Colonel Stanley who had the management of the Bill refused at first to give way, but subsequently was forced into concession. Concession thus grudgingly made rendered the assaults upon the Bill only more inveterate. Mr. Parnell and his friends took the opportunity afforded them by the Liberals of using their ordinary tactics in all their fulness. Nor was it till quite the end of the session, and after the rejection of a resolution in favour of the abolition of flogging moved by Lord Hartington, that the Bill was got through the House. So much time had it occupied, that in order to allow of its becoming law before the close of the session, it was hurried through the Upper House without debate.

It was impossible for the public to read the reports of these stormy scenes, and to observe the unchecked violence of the language used, without feeling that the dignity of Parliament, of which hitherto Englishmen had been perhaps unduly proud, had suffered a severe blow. The Irish had found a weak place in the arrangements of an assembly hitherto governed by the supposition that some mutual forbearance and courtesy would be exhibited in the strife of parties. Their unscrupulous use of the discovery they had made, justifiable only as a weapon of despair, was driving home the truth that it is impossible—without recourse to measures little short of coercive—to suppress even a small body of irreconcilable opponents, who, smarting under the feeling of oppression, regard themselves as emancipated from the ordinary rules of political warfare. Such was the position occupied by Mr. Parnell and his friends. Deeply impressed with the sufferings of their native land, which were indeed very real, and seeing no cure for them but the transference of the management of Irish affairs to Irish hands, they regarded some form of Home Rule as an absolute necessity. All

Obstruction
used against
the Army
Discipline Bill.
April 1879.

Determination
of the Home
Rulers.

efforts made in due Parliamentary form and with due respect for Parliamentary etiquette having proved ineffectual, they threw to the winds all restraint, and determined to fight the battle in a less scrupulous manner. But they were well aware of the close connection of social and political questions. If the social evils of Ireland could be cured only by political changes, political changes could be insured only by engaging the social passions of the nation. They saw in the present state of Ireland an opportunity for bringing this lever to bear. For the relief which the Land Law of 1870 was intended to secure for the tenants, in part thwarted by the defects of the law itself, had been also neutralised by the depression of agriculture. There was every sign of approaching distress, even of famine.

The use they made of the distress in Ireland.

The potato crop had failed, the rainy season had prevented the drying of the peat—the only fuel of the country, pauperism was on the increase, the traffic returns of the railways showed a considerable falling off, there was less consumption of luxuries, and voices were raised demanding public works for the relief of poverty.

It was in a country thus already prepared by distress and want that Mr. Parnell and his followers began in June to set on foot an agitation against rent. It would be fairer to call it an agitation against landlordism. The cure proposed was nothing less than the getting rid entirely of landlords, and the establishment of a peasant proprietary. Mr. O'Connor Power may be said to have summed up the views of the agitation. "If you ask me," he said, "to state in a brief sentence what is the Irish land question, I say it is the restoration of the land to the people of Ireland; and if you ask me for the solution of the land question in accordance with philosophy, experience, and common sense, I shall be equally brief and explicit,—abolish landlordism, and make the man who occupies and cultivates the soil the owner of the soil." It was in June that the agitation first began. It encountered at first the same sort of opposition from the old Home Rule party that obstruction had encountered in Parliament. At a meeting in Dublin of the Home Rule League, on the 21st of August, groans were given for absent members, although they had explained that their absence was due to their devotion to the land question. But when Parliament rose and the members were free to give all their energy to the agitation, it became evident that their views so far from going beyond the wishes of the mass of Irishmen fell short of them. Through the months of August, September, and October, meetings were held in which assertions as to the necessity of getting rid of the landlords called forth ominous cries, which showed

Mr. Parnell's political agitation in Ireland.

that the idea of the use of physical force was very prevalent. It cannot be said that Mr. Parnell gave any countenance to such a feeling, unless it be found in his failure seriously to reprehend it. After contrasting the various ways in which landlords had been got rid of in other countries of Europe, he said that in Ireland he looked only to peaceful and constitutional means for the settlement of the question, and proceeded to explain what those means were. They were in fact the adoption of the obstructive policy pursued in Parliament. He suggested that farmers should combine and ask for due reductions. "It was then," he said, "the duty of the tenantry to pay no rent until they got the reduction. If they kept a firm grip of their homesteads no power on earth could prevail against them." But he calculated that such conduct would drive the landlords to sell. "They would find," he said, "after one or two seasons like that, that the landlord class would be only too willing to come in and say, 'For God's sake give us the value of our lands, and let us go in peace!' and they could afford to purchase the land, because on account of the present system the land of Ireland was not yet half cultivated." To support his agitation and assist his ends in both directions he proposed, on the one side, the establishment of a national convention consisting of 300 members chosen by popular election; the repeal of the old Convention Act in the last session had rendered such an assembly legal. Its objects were to be political. On the other side he established the Irish Land League, whose primary object was no longer to secure fixity of tenure and fair rents, but peasant proprietorship. For this end subscriptions were to be sought, especially in America, for the purpose of buying out the landlords. This appeal to the American Irish Mr. Parnell undertook himself to carry across the Atlantic.

The movement seemed to the Government dangerous enough to require their interference. A meeting at Gurteen in Sligo on November the 2d afforded the required opportunity. The full programme of the agitators was there urged in words of considerable violence. The people were advised to refuse to submit to eviction, to withhold rent, neither to take nor to suffer others to take land from which a man had been evicted; even the resumption, as it was called, by the people of what had originally belonged to them was mentioned with approbation. Mr. Killen, Mr. Daly, and Mr. Michael Davitt, who were the chief speakers, were apprehended on a charge of using seditious language; and subsequently Mr. Brennan, who at a great meeting at Bala in Mayo had adopted Mr. Davitt's

Arrest of Irish leaders.

vict.

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words, was added to their number. These arrests and the absence of Mr. Parnell somewhat allayed the agitation for a time. His conduct during the mission he had undertaken laid him open to a good deal of blame. The distress in Ireland had been increasing, and it was avowedly with the intention of collecting funds to relieve the pressure of want that Mr. Parnell had gone to America. At the same time he had always declared that this was but a secondary object, and that he chiefly aimed at exciting the sympathy and support of the Irish in America for their fellow-countrymen in their efforts to change the laws regarding land. Not unnaturally it seemed strange that he should refuse to serve on a committee for the relief of distress, if, as was asserted, famine was not only approaching but had actually come to Ireland. It seemed a perverse and cold-blooded proceeding to postpone the crying needs of the moment to political ends. Yet there was in fact no inconsistency in his conduct. He acted as Mr. Shaw acted in moving an amendment on the Address when the Parliament met in February. He looked beyond the immediate present and desired to attack what he regarded as the permanent cause of recurring distress.

It was not only the Irish members who took the opportunity of freedom from Parliamentary service to rouse agitation. The Parliament was of necessity drawing towards its close. Its course had been marked by events which render it in some way the most remarkable of modern times. Never since the Reform Bill had the Conservative party been able to carry out in so masterful a way the principles by which they were actuated; never had they been able to give the nation so clear a view of the course and consequences of their policy. Although at the instant there was no single great question on which the opinion of the nation could be taken, there was a rivalry both of parties and of individuals, a clearly marked divergence in every principle of government, which promised to give to the decisions at the coming elections a most momentous character. The last Ministry of Mr. Gladstone, the present Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield, complete expositions respectively of the principles of the parties and of their leaders, afforded ample ground on which the constituencies could form a judgment. And both parties thoroughly understood the critical character of the occasion. Never before had England resounded with so many utterances of first-rate importance as marked the autumnal recess of 1879. There was no immediate proof of any change in the general feeling of the

Object of Mr. Parnell's visit to America.

General review of the Conservative Parliament.

Autumnal speeches of 1879 against the Ministry.

country. The bye elections showed if anything a continued preponderance in favour of the Conservatives. But a considerable number of Liberal successes in the municipal elections seemed to show that among the boroughs at least the tide had begun to turn. The indictment which could be formed against the Ministry was indeed a strong one. It was difficult to repel the assertion that their great foreign policy had resulted in failure. Russia had not been checked, but had been alienated. Turkey had not been saved, but had been stripped of many of its provinces. The acquisition of Cyprus entailed nothing but expense. English influence in Egypt had not been established; on the contrary France had made good its claims to partnership, with the chance of endless complications. South Africa, pacified for a while by forcible annexation and a disastrous war, had not been confederated. Instead of a strong and independent Afghanistan, a broken and rebellious country was scarcely kept in order by the British troops that occupied it. If the foreign policy was unsatisfactory there seemed but little in the management of domestic affairs to compensate for it. No measure of first-rate importance had been added to the statute-book, though there were certain bills, such as the Army Discipline Bill, the Dublin University Bill, and the completion of the Judicature Acts, for which the Government deserved credit. But in the chief characteristic of the Parliamentary warfare of the time they had shown a considerable want of vigour. Obstruction had not been met with much firmness, and even the resolutions which had been passed to limit it had remained unused. Their finance had not been particularly successful. The sinking fund established for the gradual payment of the National Debt had met the fate of all sinking funds, and been employed to meet the deficit caused by the expenses of the foreign policy. The expenditure of the year had risen, especially that on the military and naval services. The Budgets had been of the most unpretending character. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had seemed contented to leave things exactly as they were, and to meet any deficit that arose by the easy machinery of the income-tax or by short loans. The Government was even charged, though with some injustice, with the wave of depression which was passing over the country; confidence it was said had been shaken, with its inevitable consequence, a fall of trade.

It was plain however that such charges as these rested upon a basis of opinion only. It was open to the adherents of Government to reply that England had never of late years occupied so important a part in the politics of the world: that even at

Defence of Government.

the risk of some disaster the recognition of its imperial responsibilities was the proper duty of a great nation : that the Eastern question had been settled without war yet without injury to British interests : the very absence of what is called sensational legislation was in itself an advantage after the hurried and injurious violence of the last Ministry : the maintenance at their full efficiency of the military services was a matter of necessity for a powerful and imperial nation ; and the depression under which England was suffering was to be traced solely to economic causes. It was thus that the country rang from one end to the other with excited oratory, supporting one or other of these views and admired or blamed according to the opinion of the hearers. To which view the majority of the constituencies would incline was to be settled in a few months.

A brief session intervened. The Government did nothing important to change the balance of opinion. The means taken to meet the famine in Ireland were explained. The terms on which money was advanced for improvements to land-owners had been lowered to one per cent. ; a circular had been issued to Boards of Guardians impressing upon them the necessity of being prepared for possible contingencies ; they had been instructed to notify any great distress in their unions, and the Lord-Lieutenant was authorised to summon a meeting of the baronial sessions, at whose instance useful and profitable public works were to be undertaken. As the Government in acting thus had gone beyond their powers, a Bill indemnifying them and authorising the measures taken was introduced early in the session. It met with bitter criticism from the Irish, who seemed unable to understand the extreme difficulty of giving in such a manner as to avoid injury to the self-reliance of the recipients, and were indignant that the landlords should be employed as intermediaries in distributing the public loans. The pressing necessity of these measures placed them first in the programme of the session. They were followed by a show of vigour, in the determined attempt of Government to put an end to obstruction by the introduction of a new standing order, placing upon the Speaker the duty of declaring when obstruction had arisen, but leaving the power of punishing it in the hands of the House. Both the great parties were equally eager for this step, which was therefore taken without serious difficulty. It was very generally supposed that the Government were contemplating, in preparation for the coming election, some sweeping domestic measure probably with regard to land, for which the ground was to be cleared

Measures to
relieve Irish
famine.
Feb. 1880.

Measures
against
obstruction.

by the removal of obstruction. But no such measure was proposed. The land legislation which had been promised in the Queen's Speech was limited to a lessening of the expenses of conveyance, and to the placing in the hands of the life tenant of settled property the power under certain restrictions of selling or leasing it.

In none of these debates had there been any appearance of weakness or division in the Conservative party : nor did there seem any particular ground on which to dissolve. It would appear to have been the Metropolitan Water Bill which ultimately fixed the date of dissolution. The Government attempted to consolidate the seven Water Companies of London in the hands of a central body created by Government. It was a large scheme involving the transference of stock valued at more than £27,000,000. The suggestion was at once assailed upon the ground that the sum to be paid the Water Companies was far too liberal. The contention seemed to be proved by the enormous rise which took place in the value of the stocks in anticipation of the coming change. It was whispered that not only had much legitimate speculation been engendered, but that early knowledge of the intentions of Government had enabled some speculators to make large sums of money. The disapprobation felt outside the House seemed likely to be repeated within its walls, and in order to avoid a possible weakening of their majority the Government considered it desirable to put an end immediately to the Parliament which would in due course have been dissolved in a few months.

Metropolitan
Water Works
Bill.

The immediate dissolution was made known on the 8th of March. For a few days longer the Parliament continued its sittings to get through the necessary work of the Budget. But all political interest was now centred in the coming election ; one after another in rapid succession the addresses of the party leaders appeared, and again as in the preceding autumn the country rang with political speech-making. The most important utterance of the Premier was contained in a letter addressed to the Duke of Marlborough, the Lord-Lieutenant for Ireland, published on the 9th of March. It was eminently characteristic of the man. Whatever may be thought of Lord Beaconsfield's policy or of his methods of action, it is impossible to deny the correctness of his foresight. The point of his letter was the danger under Liberal rule of the disintegration of the Empire. His opponents, he asserted, had attempted "to enfeeble our colonies by their policy of decomposition," and now there was every risk that the same process would be carried

Lord Beacons-
field's letter.
March 9, 1880.

further, and that the close union of England and Ireland would be broken. But "the power and unity of the English Empire could alone give it that ascendancy in the councils of Europe which would secure peace." He insinuated in a manner which could not be mistaken the complicity of the Liberal party with the Home Rulers and Separatists of Ireland. It was there that to his mind the great danger lay. The connection was indignantly repudiated by the Liberal leaders, who professed a zeal equal to Lord Beaconsfield's for the maintenance of the Empire, and asserted that the policy of self-government as applied to the Colonies had proved the only efficacious method for avoiding disruption. With regard to Ireland they denied in the strongest terms the possibility of yielding to the wishes of the Nationalists or the Home Rule party. Yet although Lord Beaconsfield's assertion was treated as a party move, and as casting a wholly unwarrantable aspersion upon the character of his opponents, it had in it much of truth. Just as he had foreseen at the time of the Land Act the gradual approach of a general opposition to rent, so he now foresaw the time when the demand for Home Rule would be supported by a large and influential section of Englishmen. Such foresight is one of the attributes of the highest statesmanship. Yet when it leads only to an attempt to stereotype a bygone political attitude, and to check rather than guide the inevitable progress of political and social forces, it is less effective in influencing the history of a nation than the more limited view of statesmen who may not indeed perceive the full scope of the measures they advise, but whose sympathies are keenly alive to the great movements of public thought and opinion. Lord Beaconsfield was right in asserting that "the decision of the nation would materially influence its future fortune and shape its destiny." That peace could not be obtained by the passive principle of non-interference but "rested on the presence, not to say the ascendancy, of England in the Councils of Europe" was an assertion belonging to a state of things which had wholly passed away, and which the political conscience of England could never suffer to return.

While the Premier thus illustrated at once the greatness and weakness of his views, his rival hastened to lay before the world his more progressive programme and to defend himself and his party from the charges brought against him. He betook himself to his new constituencies of Midlothian, and there poured out a stream of oratory so copious as almost to attract ridicule from his enemies. The ridicule was misplaced. In the autumn his reception in Edinburgh and along the line of his journey had

Mr. Gladstone's
Midlothian
Speeches.

been extraordinarily enthusiastic. It was no less so now. His fervid eloquence, the solemnity with which he emphasised the importance of the crisis, and the boldness with which, while criticising the Government, he repudiated all idea of sudden change of policy, inspired with an entirely new life the whole Liberal party in the country. The leadership of Lord Hartington had been in some ways able. His powers as a speaker had grown with practice; the steadiness and strength and solidity of his character were fully acknowledged. But he had not possessed that power of inspiration or that complete sympathy with popular feeling which were the peculiar gifts of Mr. Gladstone. The voice of their old leader, who seemed to outdo himself in his energy, and his outspoken expressions of confidence of success, roused the party to an enthusiasm which carried all before it. His burning words, supported by the able speeches of the other Liberal leaders who took their tone from him, laid before the people the real character of the choice they were required to make, and recalled England to its old traditions. The phantom of old-world imperialism lately so popular vanished at his touch, and the country gave its answer with no doubtful voice. The Liberal majority at the election was sufficient to counterbalance the Conservatives and the Home Rulers combined.

Liberal result
of the elections.
April 1880.

CHAPTER XIII.

GROWTH OF THE DEMOCRACY.

MANY of the chief questions of the time were left unsettled on Mr. Gladstone's return to office. The completion even of the reform of the representative system by the equalisation of the franchise in town and country, and the accompanying redistribution of seats was still wanting; it was impossible to foresee the developments through which the Irish question might pass; restraints on intemperance and the acceptance at least of some form of local option were still things of the future; the line of conduct with regard both to domestic and foreign affairs which the new constituencies would adopt remained to be proved. But the great change which the course of more than forty years from the passing of the Reform Bill had produced in England had been virtually accomplished. The events which accompanied the election of 1880, and the social changes visible in the country in all directions, gave unanswerable proof that England had become a democracy. Unguarded by any written document, the Constitution of England has been open to continual growth and development. Even while the main outline and framework of the Constitution has been preserved, the shifting of the balance of forces within it has produced changes as complete as though the framework itself had been remodelled. Such a change in the relation existing between the various powers of the State had taken place in the course of the last forty years.

The line which separated the Upper from the Lower House had been broadened. The close connection which subsisted between a House of Lords and a House of Commons largely composed of their relatives and nominees had been broken by the Reform Bill of 1832. The aristocratic element in the Lower House had been supplanted by the representatives of the middle class. To the theoretic Liberals who had taken the lead in the reformed House of Commons the Second Chamber appeared an obstacle in the way of that supremacy of the national representation which it was

Changes in the Constitution.

Separation between the two Houses.

668

their chief object to obtain. They were full of hostility, often outspoken enough, to the rival House. Disagreement between the Houses was no longer easily got over; one party or other must yield, and the wisdom of the leaders of the Lords generally induced them to avoid contest. After the passing of the second Reform Bill a further change was visible. The Lords by no means abdicated their position as a legislative body; on the contrary, as in the case of the rejection of the repeal of the paper-duty in 1860, they gave proof of renewed activity. Yet though their action roused a storm for a time, the change which had taken place in the character and position of the Commons tended rather to decrease the open hostility between the Houses. It was rather as a useless and superfluous adjunct to the Constitution, than as a rival in power, that the House of Lords became henceforward objectionable to the advanced Liberals of the Lower House.

For the power of the Lower House had become irresistible, at the same time that its position as an independent body had been seriously affected. Its increase of power arose from the widespread mass of opinion on which it rested; its loss of position on the fact that it had ceased to be much more than the mouthpiece of that opinion. To this end the organisation necessary for the management in the interests of party of the wide half-educated constituencies had largely contributed. What has been spoken of as the "caucus" system had been introduced. In each constituency the management of the party and the selection of the candidate had been intrusted to a committee of some 300 or 400 of the more prominent politicians. Themselves chosen on distinctly party grounds, they naturally selected that candidate who was most ready to pledge himself to vote for the objects of the party. Independence on the part of the candidate became a disqualification, and the members sent up to Parliament ceased to be representatives and became delegates. It is plain that under such circumstances the House of Commons lost its position as the political instructor of the country. It was to the constituencies themselves, and not to their representatives already pledged, that rhetoric and argument must henceforward be addressed. The flood of extra Parliamentary eloquence which marked the election of 1880 shows how thoroughly this change had been carried out, and how completely it was understood by the leaders.

The personal character of politics was a further result of the decision of political questions being thus thrown into the hands of the voters themselves. It was not to be supposed that even a majority in the new constituencies should be capable of forming political opinions.

The Lower House loses its representative character.

But they were capable of appreciating general principles and tendencies when represented by a leader ; and thus political contests assumed the form of rivalries between individual chiefs, and, at elections, party cries were simplified into the names of Gladstone or of Beaconsfield. It

Increase of
sentiment in
politics.

was the same incapacity for real political opinion, the same want of political knowledge, which lay at the bottom of what is perhaps the most prominent instance of democratic change, the predominance given in politics to sentiment. The course of politics ceased to be directed in accordance with highly instructed, perhaps sophisticated thought, and fell chiefly under the guidance of the general feeling of what it was upon the whole right to do. The intricacies of diplomacy fell into disrepute, the advantages of balanced powers lost credit. It was indeed a part of the creed of the leading Liberals that the moral judgments of the people at large might be fully trusted. In full accordance with this state of things was the direct appeal to sentiment made by both the leaders in 1880. The love of imperialism, the somewhat vulgar patriotism which demands the ascendancy of the country in the councils of the world, was the sentiment which Lord Beaconsfield hoped to reach. The love of justice, the desire for the removal of social and political inequalities within the nation itself, combined with the unobtrusive enjoyment of greatness and prosperity shared by other nations, was the somewhat nobler sentiment to which Mr. Gladstone addressed himself. The feeling for justice was no doubt quickened by the difficulties in which the aggressive policy of the late Ministry had involved the Empire, and given its full weight by party organisation. Mr. Gladstone's victory was the result.

While thus whether for good or evil the democratic element in the Constitution had been continually gathering power, a similar change had been passing over society. The vast increase of wealth, derived chiefly from trade and manufacture, had not only added very greatly to the importance of the moneyed class, but had necessarily affected the position and aspirations of those engaged in industrial pursuits. The extraordinary development of the Empire and the rapid acquisition of wealth form in some respects the most striking characteristic of the time

It was indeed not without cause that Lord Beaconsfield had found in the cry of Imperial interests a word to conjure with. Those

Increase of
the Empire.

interests had grown to vast proportions. The Colonial Empire had in mere population quadrupled ; the 4,000,000 which was an outside calculation of its numbers at the

accession of the Queen had risen to nearly 16,000,000. Ports which forty years before had been little more than a few scattered wooden villages had become vast and prosperous cities, from which and to which flowed annually a stream of commerce, which could not be estimated at less than £150,000,000. Since the time of Lord Durham and the establishment of the Canadian Constitution, nearly all the more important colonies had been granted self-government and were connected with the mother country by the slenderest of ties. It would be no doubt wrong to trace their development entirely to this cause. Many circumstances and influences had combined to produce this result. The accumulation of population and of capital in England, and the necessity of finding outlets for it ; the gold discoveries of Australia ; the demand for raw materials in the constantly increasing manufacture of the mother country ; the removal of the stigma laid upon some of the colonies by the system of transportation ; all these had played their part in the general development. But it is scarcely to be doubted that the wise policy which bestowed on the rising communities the privileges of self-government had been a principal cause both of their prosperity and their continual loyalty. Though the peculiar condition of India had demanded a different treatment it none the less enjoyed its fair share of the general improvement. The population of British India had nearly doubled ; tributary states had passed under the more beneficent rule of England, till four-fifths of the vast population were directly under British rule. Its revenues had risen from £22,000,000 to nearly £70,000,000 ; it was no longer a burden upon the mother country. To keep together so vast an Empire, to maintain its loyalty, to harmonise its jarring interests, to make its widespread members integral portions of the British State is a worthy object of statesmanship, and may well be purchased by considerable self-denial on the part of the nation. It is true that the increase of legitimate Imperial responsibility implied by the extension of the colonies had of necessity brought with it much increase of expenditure. In 1838 £51,000,000 had sufficed to meet the requirements of Government. In 1880 no less a sum than £84,000,000 was required. The larger portion of this extra expenditure was for the support of the army and navy. This increase began at the time of the Crimean war ; the comparative failure of the army at that time seemed to show that the money hitherto granted for warlike purposes had been insufficient. Nor had the circumstances of Europe subsequently allowed of any return to more economical estimates. Every great nation had reorganised and largely increased its army, and even

when not actually engaged in war had thought it necessary to maintain a watchful and guarded attitude. England was unable to withdraw from the general movement, and although its army could not be considered as sufficient for any great offensive measures, the defence of itself and its colonies in the presence of the great armaments of foreign countries had probably rendered the increase of expenditure necessary.

Fortunately the additional burden upon the finances of the country had been met by a corresponding addition to its resources. It is difficult to say how much of the increased wealth depended upon changes in the financial system of the country, but as commercial prosperity and the system of finance react upon each other, it is not unreasonable to attribute it principally to those improvements in finance which were introduced by Sir Robert Peel. At the beginning of the reign in spite of the comparatively small expenditure the yearly budget showed a constant deficit, while at the same time industry suffered severely from the pressure of the Excise and protective Customs duties. In 1842 Sir Robert Peel called upon the nation to make an effort to restore the equilibrium of the finances, and proposed, as at a time of great emergency, the reimposition of the income-tax, properly speaking a war tax. At the same time he took the opportunity of largely reducing the Customs duties on a great number of articles. The policy thus begun was maintained. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 marked the triumph of free-trade principles; under Mr. Gladstone and the Chancellors of the Exchequer who succeeded him they were carried to completion. The success of the change was so great that had it not been for the interruption caused by war and by the increase of military expenditure, the income-tax might perhaps, as was originally intended, have proved but a temporary burden. But at no time was it found possible to do without it, and it became a regular part of the fiscal system, indeed perhaps too completely the mainstay of each successive Chancellor. No tax once taken off has ever been successfully reimposed, nor does it seem possible to attempt any new form of indirect taxation. Although it was not so intended, the new financial system fell in exactly with the general democratic growth. It resulted in a complete alteration of the proportion of indirect to direct taxation, and not only threw as a matter of course a far larger burden upon the classes above the artisans, but also placed upon the same class of comparatively well-to-do people the burden of meeting the general increase of expenditure and the extraordinary demand

Improved
financial
system.

upon the public purse which circumstances from time to time required.

Under the new conditions of finance the industry and trade of the country advanced with giant strides. The coal and iron industries, which formed the basis of English commercial wealth, were quadrupled; the wool, the linen, and the cotton manufactures were doubled; in the trade with foreign countries the exports advanced from £45,000,000 to nearly £200,000,000, and the imports at a similar rate. It is estimated, upon the basis of the income-tax returns, that the value of the property of the United Kingdom amounted in 1880 to nearly £9,000,000,000 as against £4,000,000,000 in 1837. But the mere accumulation of wealth, while it undoubtedly largely increased the number and influence of the middle class and raised to social preponderance the possessors of moneyed wealth, affected also the great mass of the working class, professional or artisan. Had it not been so the result would have been merely to accentuate the difference of classes and to set an ever-broadening gap between the rich and poor. There is a general tendency to suppose that this fatal result actually occurred, nor can it be denied that the distribution of wealth threw the greater share of the advantages of its increase into the hands of men of capital. Yet it is impossible, in the face of statistics derived from the income-tax returns, and from a comparison of prices in relation to wages, to deny that professional incomes had considerably increased, that the number of those whose wealth placed them within the area of the income-tax was constantly larger, or that the artisan was in a better position than he had ever previously been. All the necessities of life freed from taxation had become cheaper, and the standard of comfort had unquestionably risen, so that articles were now considered as necessities which forty years before the poor man would scarcely have dreamt of possessing. It might seem that the improvements in machinery and the greater productiveness of the same amount of labour, while tending to the cheapening of commodities, must have acted prejudicially on the workmen by decreasing the amount of work required. But these improvements had been attended with such an expansion of manufactures, that although the population had largely increased, the demand for labour had more than kept pace with it. It is to be observed that the increase of population had been almost entirely in the classes of professional men and artisans. There was little or no change to be perceived in the number of ordinary labourers. This would seem to point to the one-sided character of the develop-

One-sided
growth of
prosperity.

Condition of
the artisan.

ment which had taken place. It was to the advantage of commerce and manufactures that legislation and the course of events had alike contributed. Chiefly through the instrumentality of Trades Unions the artisan had succeeded in obtaining higher wages, and, reaping the advantage of cheaper production, he was now in a better state than he had ever before been. He had been raised to political importance, and the sense of his new position was constantly forced upon him by the political parties who sought his aid. In the presence of rapidly accumulating wealth, of which he could not but regard his own work as the origin, he was naturally inclined to turn his attention to the laws which governed the distribution of this wealth, and to seek a larger share of it for himself. Popular support was abundantly given to this aspiration of the working man, for it fell in exactly with the conscientious sentiment of the time. The uneasiness of the working classes in towns would thus appear to have depended rather upon success than upon depression. It showed itself in the repeated recurrence of strikes and hardly fought battles between employers and employed. Victory declared itself sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other; on the whole the result was favourable to the claims of the working man. But the artisans had not yet advanced seriously any of those views in favour of a reconstitution of society which have since forced themselves into notice, although there were indications of their approach among the more advanced Trades-unionists and the International Society.

Yet in one direction the principles of political economy as hitherto accepted were being called in question, and that not by the working men themselves, but by a class above them. For the legislation which had been so advantageous to manufactures and commerce had acted unfavourably upon agriculture. It was no longer possible to feed the increased population on the produce of the kingdom alone; the greater facilities afforded to the importation of foreign supplies by the employment of steamships, had worked hand in hand with the removal of preferential duties, and the agriculturist found himself face to face with a vast foreign competition. The vitality of manufactures centred chiefly in cities, drew the population more and more from the country districts, and the difficulties of competition were still further heightened by a comparative paucity of labour; Trades-unionism under the able guidance of Mr. Arch found its way into the rural populations, and wages rose there as well as elsewhere. The advantage gained by the labourer proved detrimental to the farmer. During the very height of pro-

Condition of
Agriculture.

sperity, about the year 1870, this was not felt; the foreigner had not yet organised his competition, and the landlords had been able considerably to raise their rents. But the pressure of increased rent and increased labour payments proved before long, when they were exposed to the full force of competition, disastrous to the farmers. Thus finding themselves hard pressed in the midst of general prosperity, the farmers began to lend a ready ear to suggestions for improving their position, which might not improbably prove to be the beginning of a great social change. The example of Ireland was before them; the successful agitation which had produced the Irish Land Law, and the view of the limited character of property in land which that law seemed to recognise, began to have their effect in England. Demands for lowered rent, cries against the tyranny of landlords, suggestions coming chiefly from America that the nationalisation of land was both just and desirable, began to be heard. That land is an absolute necessity of life, that its amount is limited, and that it is in the hands of few, were held to distinguish it from other commodities. The right of the owner to appropriate the unearned increment, that is to say, the large increase of value which his property had acquired from the mere change of circumstances, and without any exertion of his own, began to be seriously questioned. Inquiries into the source and limits of the rights of property, which might easily be very far reaching, were set on foot.

Meanwhile the condition of the very poor had been exciting general attention. There was a very prevalent feeling that the extremes of wealth and misery were becoming constantly further separated, and that the class which had been spoken of ^{Condition of the very poor.} as "the residuum" was on the increase. No doubt this unhappy class was numerous enough, consisting of those whose intermittent work and uncertain wages allowed them but a precarious livelihood, or of those who from want of energy and self-restraint were seldom fit to earn any wages at all, and who lived in the large cities a migratory and intemperate, often a criminal life, scarcely above the level of starvation. Yet the belief of the increase of the class was without foundation. There was much in the reduced returns of pauperism and crime wholly inconsistent with such an increase. Certainly the burden of the poor upon the nation was far less threatening than it had been when under the old Poor-Law the amount of pauperism seemed to be bringing on immediate disaster.

Yet although the amount of poverty in proportion to the population was less than it had been, the public mind was more sensitive to its

existence, the feeling of public duty and of the responsibilities of wealth had largely increased, and upon this more sensitive conscience the fact of the existence of a great mass of suffering and of poverty had been forced by the visible contrasts exhibited by the growing cities. The wealth which had poured so abundantly into the country had shown itself in the extraordinary increase of large towns, especially of London, in the erection of streets and squares and indeed whole quarters of suburban villas inhabited by the wealthy class. Meanwhile the influx of working people from the country had been continuous. Room had to be found for the growing population either in the already overcrowded courts and lanes, or in squalid districts hidden behind the splendours of the wealthy streets, or in monotonous and uninteresting rows of mean cottages. In a few steps a man might pass from a scene of extreme luxury and comfort to a filthy lane where fever was seldom absent, and an hour's walk from the west to the east of London would show at its one extremity the lavish employment of all that makes life pleasant, parks and gardens and places of amusement, and at the other a dreary monotony of sordid and unbroken dullness.

The close juxtaposition of such different conditions of life was well calculated to touch the sentiment of the time, and thus for many years efforts always increasing had been made to fulfil what had come to be considered as the duties incident to the possession of wealth. The efforts were in part purely philanthropic; but on the other hand in a number of cases the intervention of the Legislature was demanded. It is thus that a whole mass of legislation affecting and restricting absolute individual freedom in many of the common occurrences of life came into existence. It is thus that restrictions were laid on the employment of the labour of women and children, that laws of a compulsory character with regard to health and the housing of the poor were made, that education became with certain modifications compulsory, that inspections of all sorts were established over mines, factories, and ships. It was thus that the Irish Land Law was passed, and that the English tenant obtained some security for his improvements. In such legislation as this, it is impossible to avoid recognising a growing change in public opinion as to the duties of the State. In fact the system of *laissez faire* as it was called, the system which relies on the unrestricted working of the law of self-interest to secure the general welfare, was beginning to fall into discredit. The results to which it had led were not regarded with continued satisfaction. The precarious position of

Striking
contrast
between rich
and poor.

Its effect in
producing
social
legislation.

the artisan, the depression of the agriculturist, the poverty of the labourer and the class below him, seemed all direct results of the competitive system, and to call for the substitution of the directing hand of the State. With this increasing sense of the necessity for State interference, there went as a natural consequence a belief in the power of legislation to cope with all evils as they arose.

It appears then to have been chiefly in these directions that the democratic growth of the period made itself felt. The balance of political forces within the Constitution was changed so as to admit of a more direct interference on the part of the constituencies in political questions. As a consequence, sentiment, as compared with educated political thought, had assumed an increased weight in deciding the national attitude. The view of the proper functions of the State had been enlarged. There was an inclination to throw upon it the duty of interfering to secure the happiness of the individual, and consequently an increasing desire to attack every evil by immediate legislation. It was in complete harmony with these prevalent ideas that Mr. Gladstone began his new Administration.

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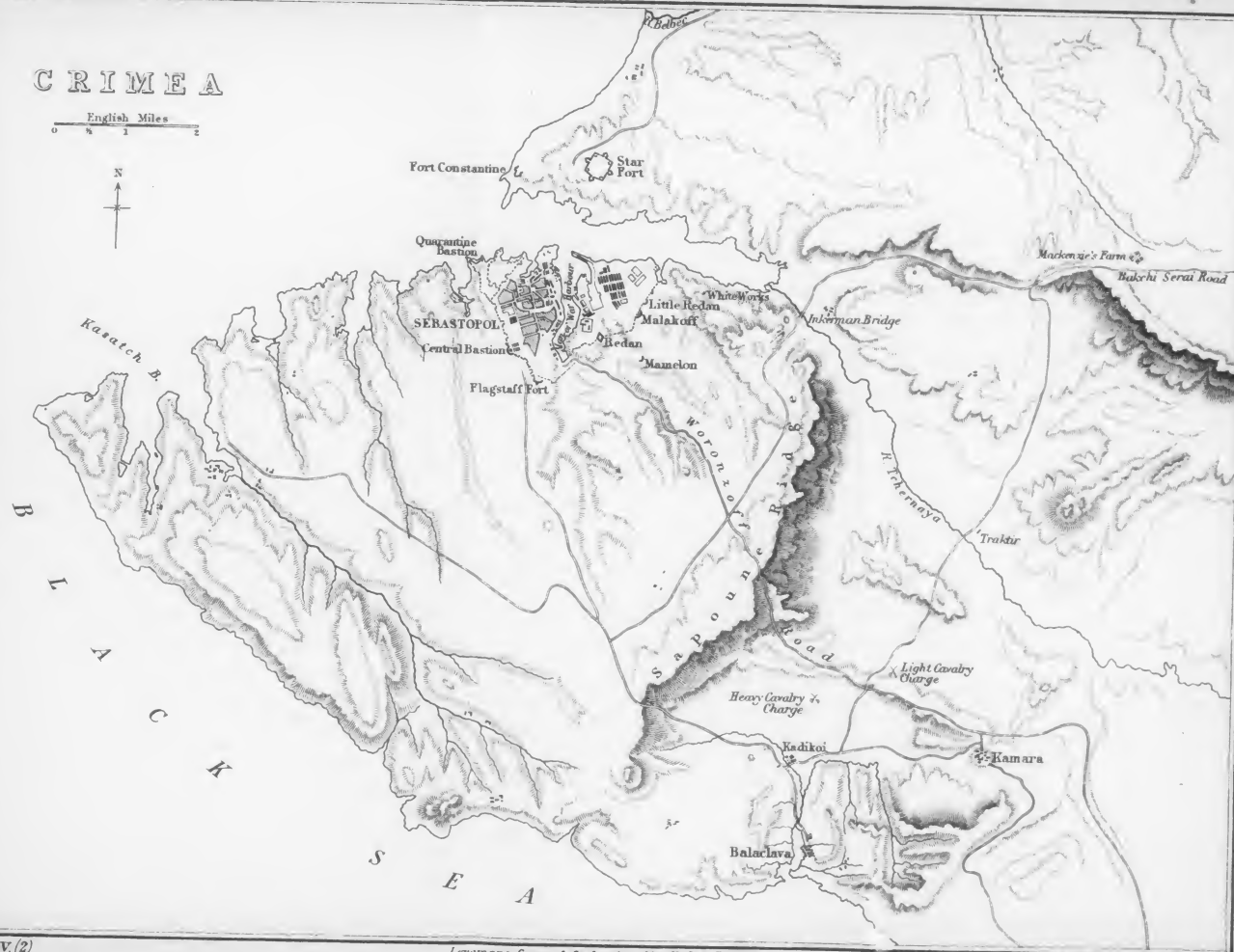
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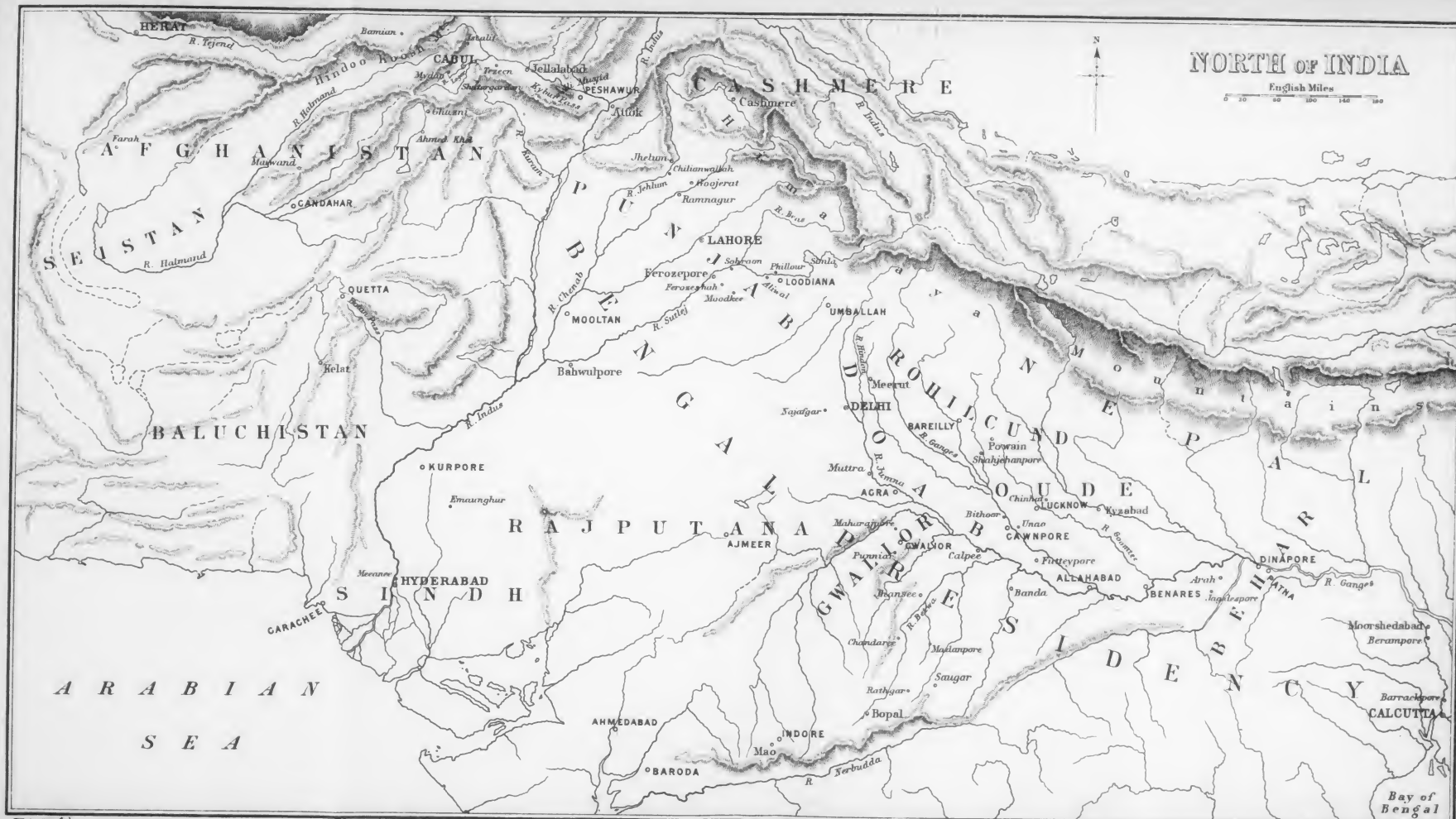
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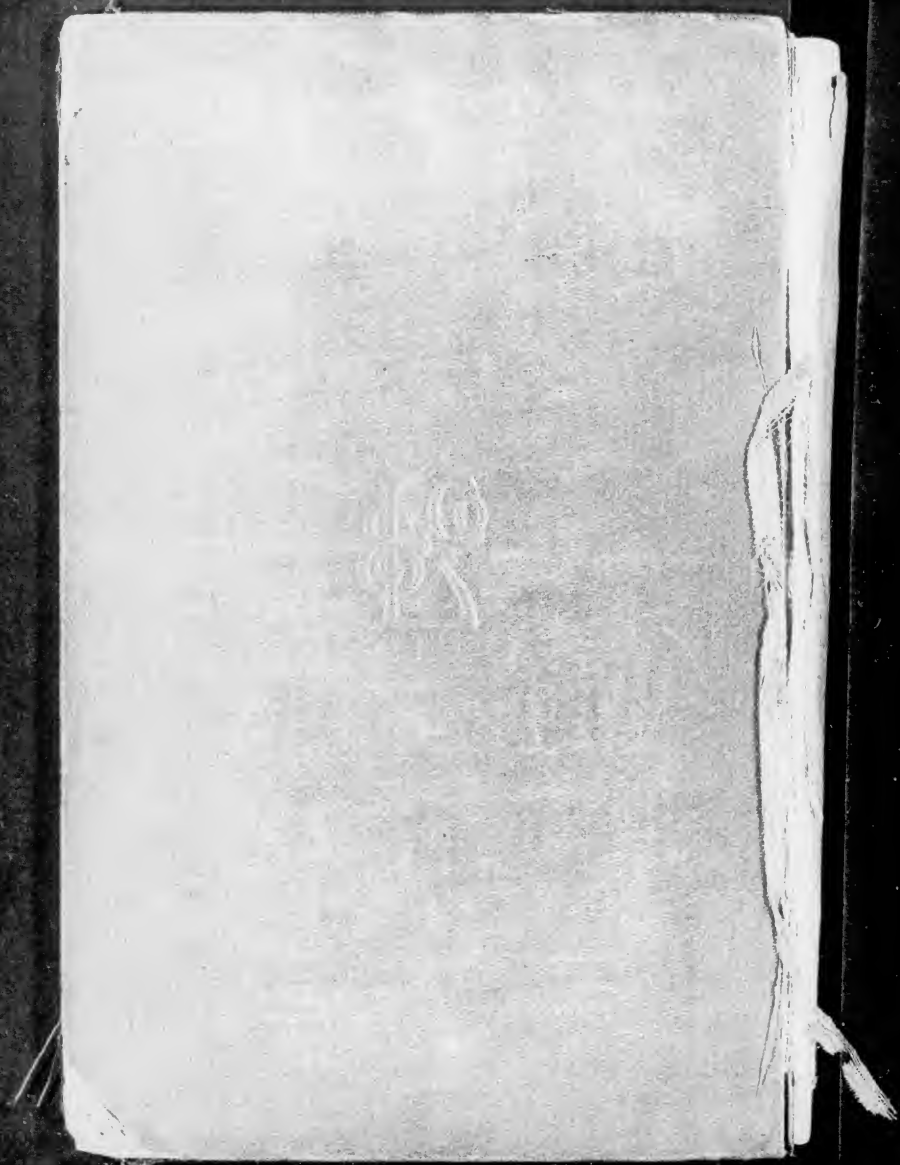




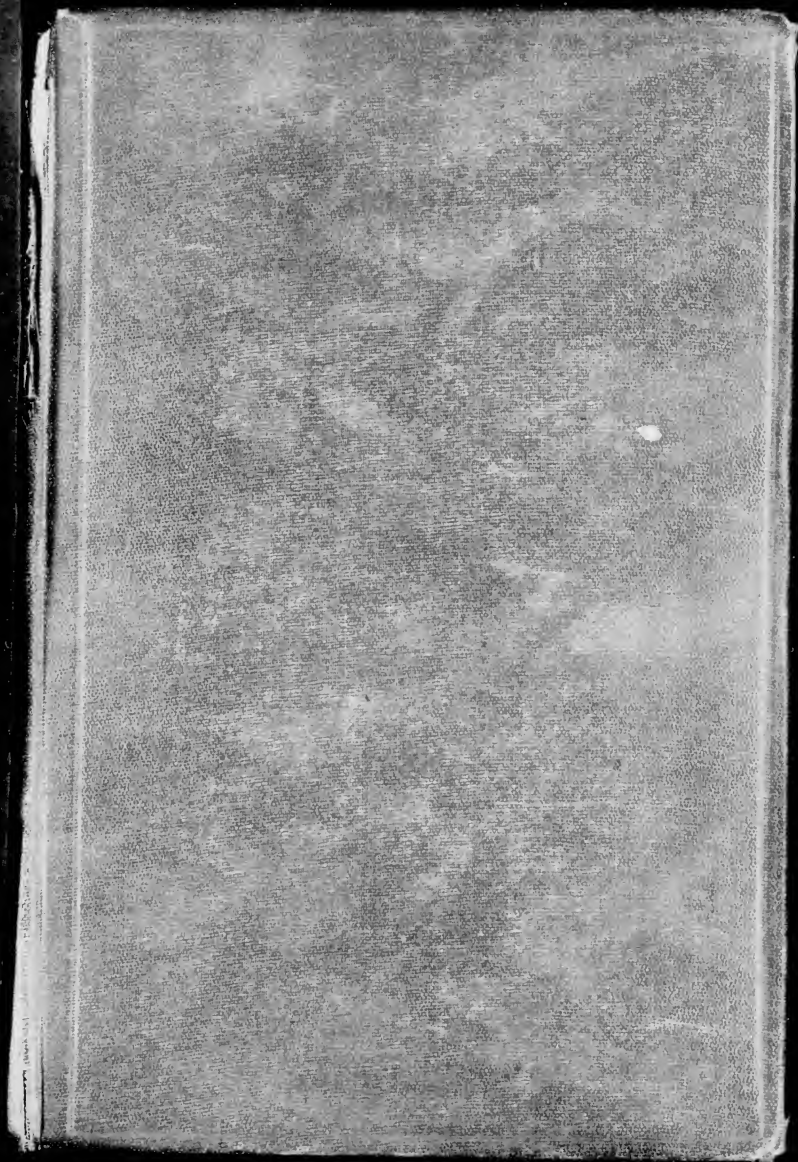
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PREFACE.

A PREFACE to a Fifth Volume may seem superfluous, yet a few words are wanted to introduce and perhaps excuse the appearance of a book treating of events of such very recent date. So close is the connection binding the events of history that it is always difficult to make a choice (which must in any case be arbitrary) of stopping-places to form what it is usual to call the beginnings or endings of periods. In writing contemporaneous history, the difficulty is accentuated by the very obvious character of this continuity. It is plain that the year 1880 cannot in any sense be regarded as such a stopping-place: the facts are incomplete, the stream of political opinion continues unchecked, and the prominent figures are the same both before and after. On the other hand, the death of Queen Victoria seems to afford an opportunity of more than usual fitness for bringing the story of the fortunes of Great Britain to a conclusion. Not only is the close of the long reign and the death of a great sovereign in itself something of an era, it so happens that in this case it synchronizes with a real change of scene. The new reign has begun with different actors on the stage, and different objects of public interest. The old generation of statesmen has passed away. The grave has closed over the fiery will and enthralling eloquence of Mr. Gladstone, and the cool sagacity and experience of Lord Salisbury. Lord Goschen, Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. John Morley have withdrawn from the leadership of parties; the high offices of State are filled by comparatively young men.

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PREFACE

It is no longer Ireland which occupies the forefront in political warfare ; its place has for the time been taken by the question of fiscal reform, hurriedly brought into prominence, but which is only one instance of the general tendency to bring all the old received opinions afresh to the touchstone. The reaction and backward swing of the pendulum, the periodical recurrence of which is an historical commonplace, has in fact set in.

It is scarcely possible to dignify these concluding chapters, or probably any narration of contemporary events and opinions, with the title of history. The passage of years is necessary to winnow the wheat from the chaff, to distinguish in the midst of the chaotic confusion of authorities and memories the points which are of real historic value. The writer wades hopelessly amid the flood of Blue-books, reports, newspaper articles, magazines, and political speeches. He is further hampered by his own recollections, and in danger of regarding as all-important the ephemeral quarrels of party which have filled the world with their clamour to the exclusion of the weightier principles that underlay them. The most that he can hope to achieve with any chance of success is to give such a consecutive and simple narrative of the facts, grouped as far as possible around certain leading lines of thought, as shall render them intelligible and assist the memory in retaining them.

Nor are such centres of grouping difficult to find ; an idea had already been launched, by which the whole movement of affairs both at home and abroad was profoundly influenced. Though the word Imperialism means different things to different men, the unity of the British empire in one form or another may be regarded as the dominating factor of political conduct. Openly, or by unrecognised influence, it has shaped the whole political life of the time. Its ramifications supply what may for the present at least be taken as the historical framework on which the events can be arranged. The magnificent efforts of the great statesman who devoted the closing years of his long life to the cause of Ireland resulted

PREFACE

in failure, before the firm opposition of the upper and middle classes of England to any slackening of the union between the British Isles. A new party line was thus drawn ; and a Conservative party, profoundly modified by the influence of its Liberal allies but strong in its one principle of union, obtained and succeeded in keeping the reins of power. The great wave of Liberal progress, which had on the whole swept on unbroken since the passing of the Reform Bill, was checked. The extreme Liberals, whose forms of thought had been gradually leavening the policy of Great Britain, robbed of the support of their moderate leaders, found themselves called upon to meet legislation in which their own ideas were re-cast in a Conservative mould. It is not always easy to trace the influence of the Imperial idea in the careful and sagacious diplomacy of Lord Salisbury. His peace-loving and somewhat cynical character did not lend itself to the rasher enthusiasms of the time ; but his experienced skill, aided by his great European reputation, enabled him to bring the country through several awkward difficulties without the sacrifice of any of the dignity of the Empire. It was however in the relation of Great Britain to the Colonies that the strength of Imperialism made itself chiefly visible. In the hands of Mr. Chamberlain, the Colonial Office assumed quite a new position of importance. Not only was territorial expansion furthered and dormant claims brought to realization, but Federation among the Colonies themselves with a view to some ultimate form of federated empire was actively supported. That such a policy should necessitate sooner or later an appeal to force was almost a matter of course : the long and costly war in South Africa was but one of its inevitable results.

It is thus around the Irish question, the reconstruction of parties, a Conservative legislation infused with Liberal ideas, a temperate but imperial foreign policy, and an unprecedented advance in the importance of the Colonies, that the facts of the time seem chiefly to centre. While the writer has emphasised these several points, he has thought it better for

PREFACE

the sake of uniformity to follow the arrangement adopted in his previous volumes and to use the successive Ministries as the formal divisions of the narrative. He makes no claim to special knowledge; no authorities have been used which are not open to any one who desires to study them. The facts mentioned have been as far as possible verified by reference to public sources. In future years it would be possible to write a history of a very different description. Documents and correspondence at present inaccessible will then be open to the world. Biographies and monographs will supply details at present unknown. A truer perspective, a more real appreciation of the value of facts, will be arrived at.

Of necessity in a work of this description the omissions have been very large. It is hoped that enough has been said to give to the readers for whom it is intended a fair if slight view of the events of real importance which marked the close of the great Queen's reign.

J. F. B.

Oxford, February 4, 1904.

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VICTORIA (continued).

1837 to 1901.

CHAPTER I.

MR. GLADSTONE'S MINISTRY, April 28, 1880, to June 12, 1885.

ERRATA.

Page 5, line 27. For 'Plunkett' read 'Plunket.'
 " 12, " 12. For 'Finnigan' read 'Finigan.'
 " 17, " 21. For 'Dillon' read 'Litton.'
 " 57, " 26. For 'Dutort' read 'Dutoit.'
 " 64, " 39. For 'Wemy's' read 'Wemyss.'
 " 82, " 39. For 'growing' read 'governing.'
 " 87, lines 4, 13, 14, 22. For 'Collins' read 'Collings.'
 " 124, " 16, 20. For 'Courtenay' read 'Courtney.'
 " 160, line 1. For 'Pouncefort' read 'Pamcefote.'
 " 206, " 28. For 'Pouncefort' read 'Pamcefote.'
 " 231, " 18. For 'Binden' read 'Bindon.'

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman (Oct. 1884).

THE attempt to throw into a historical form the events of a period so near at hand as that which opens with the elections of 1880 is beset with difficulties almost insuperable. The writer who attempts it finds himself struggling in the midst of an enormous mass of contemporary documents, and, still worse, contemporary comments generally of an ephemeral or party character. The lights flashed from all sides upon the scene entirely disturb the

VICTORIA (*continued*).

1837 to 1901.

CHAPTER I.

MR. GLADSTONE'S MINISTRY, April 28, 1880, to June 12, 1885.

THE CABINET.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Mr. Gladstone.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Mr. Gladstone.
" "	Mr. Childers (Dec. 1882).
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Selborne.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Earl Spencer.
" "	Lord Carlisle (Dec. 1882).
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Duke of Argyll.
" "	Lord Carlisle (April 1881).
" "	Lord Rosebery (Jan. 1885).
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir William Harcourt.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Lord Kimberley.
" "	Lord Derby (Dec. 1882).
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Granville.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Mr. Childers.
" "	Lord Hartington (Dec. 1882).
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Lord Hartington.
" "	Lord Kimberley (Dec. 1882).
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Lord Northbrook.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Chamberlain.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Mr. Fawcett.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Mr. Bright.
" "	Mr. Dodson (Dec. 1882).
" "	Mr. Trevelyan (Oct. 1884).
<i>President of Local Government Board,</i>	Mr. Dodson.
" "	Sir Charles Dilke (Dec. 1882).
<i>Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,</i>	Earl Cowper.
" "	Earl Spencer (May 1882).
<i>Chief Secretary for Ireland,</i>	Mr. Forster.
" "	Mr. Trevelyan (May 1882).
" "	Mr. Campbell-Bannerman (Oct. 1884).

THE attempt to throw into a historical form the events of a period so near at hand as that which opens with the elections of 1880 is beset with difficulties almost insuperable. The writer who attempts it finds himself struggling in the midst of an enormous mass of contemporary documents, and, still worse, contemporary comments generally of an ephemeral or party character. The lights flashed from all sides upon the scene entirely disturb the

perspective. Matters of no importance in their influence upon the real stream of history occupy a space wholly disproportionate to their proper claims. Personal questions, personal views, political passions, and individual opinions, which have formed the subject of many months of heated controversy, themselves worthless and uncertain, are apt to put on the appearance of the very groundwork of that national life which is being described. After all has been carefully considered, the writer knows full well that there are extant masses of letters and private memoranda to which he cannot obtain access, but which, were they made public, as many of them will hereafter be, might overthrow any conclusion at which he may have arrived. There is the constant risk of sinking into the mere annalist, or, what is even worse, of obtruding the crude thought of the moment under the assumed form of proved fact or well-supported generalisation; while over all there lies an ever-present consciousness that there is no single fact of which he makes mention with which many men still living are not much better acquainted than the writer himself. It is not without much misgiving that the narrative of Queen Victoria's reign is now resumed.

Though the General Election of 1880 had given an overwhelming majority to the Liberal party, it was not at the moment certain to whom the formation of the Ministry would be entrusted. Lord Hartington had shown much ability as leader of the Opposition, and his speeches before and during the election had been of a weight and excellence surpassing the general expectation. But it was felt on all sides that the reappearance of Mr. Gladstone in the active field of politics, and the excitement caused by his Midlothian speeches, had been the chief cause of the sweeping reaction; a Ministry without him seemed, under the circumstances, impossible, and he could scarcely serve in a Ministry of which he was not the head. The Queen, with her careful regard for constitutional precedent, could not avoid sending in the first place for Lord Hartington; but it was soon known that he had advised her to ask Mr. Gladstone to undertake once again the duties of Premier, and that her offer had been accepted.

The first condition of a progressive Liberal party is the existence within it of a section of reformers, much in advance of the more sober and experienced men of which its bulk consists. Such men had played a conspicuous part in the struggle which had resulted in the complete swing of the political pendulum. The greatness of his majority left Mr. Gladstone much freedom of choice, and considerable interest was felt as to the share in the new Ministry which would be

Mr. Gladstone's
Ministry.
April 1880.

allotted to the advanced wing of the party. The first appointments published made it evident that he was not inclined to reorganise the party by the admission of the ultra-Liberals to the Cabinet, but was determined to rely upon his old supporters. Lord Granville for foreign affairs, Lord Hartington for India, Lord Northbrook at the Admiralty, Mr. Childers at the War Office, Mr. Forster as Irish Secretary, and Lord Selborne as Lord Chancellor, were the first names announced. But a notable addition was made when two men, destined to play a very prominent part in subsequent political history, were added to the Cabinet—Sir William Vernon Harcourt as Secretary for the Home Department, and Mr. Chamberlain as President of the Board of Trade.

There was an obvious danger that the enthusiasm which had produced such striking results at the election would be followed by a chill of disappointment when the Ministry came face to face with the difficulties with which it was surrounded. Already, before the opening of Parliament, it had been necessary to sound a note of warning. Even Mr. Chamberlain had felt called upon to point out to his Radical friends that they must not expect a Government in which all shades of Liberal opinion were represented to work as quickly as its most eager members might desire. The creation of such a Government in itself implied compromise.

Inevitable disappointment of
the Radicals.

With regard to the general policy of the new Government, both its supporters and its adversaries expected that it would largely reverse the action of its predecessors. It had been largely recalled to power by the exertions of men who saw with strong dislike the development of an imperial temper in the national relations, both with other countries and with the Colonies. Yet it was contrary to all the traditions of English party government to break in any marked manner the continuity of foreign policy; and one part of the imperial idea, which consisted in the attempt to give more vigorous life to the Colonies by means of federation, appealed strongly to several members of the Cabinet. It was inevitable that on these two points the desires of the more fervid Liberals would encounter disappointment.

A still greater difficulty was to be found in Ireland, where, not unnaturally, considering the action of the Irish voters in the late election, the hope of legislation in accordance with the popular wishes ran high; yet, in the presence of the general feeling in England, it was impossible that

Prominence of
Irish difficulties.

these hopes should be satisfied. In his letter to the Duke of Marlborough (March 9, 1880), Lord Beaconsfield had indicated the Irish question as the chief difficulty of the time. Yet the immediate prominence which it occupied in public affairs came somewhat as a surprise. The Queen's speech touched on three great branches of foreign and colonial policy, in India, Turkey, and South Africa; it promised what might be considered as a fair amount of domestic legislation. But with respect to Ireland, it confined itself to the simple though important declaration that the Peace Preservation Act, now approaching its end, would be allowed to lapse, as the Government intended to rely upon the resources of the ordinary law for the maintenance of peace and order. But signs of approaching storm were visible even in the debate on the Address. There was no lack of indication that all hope of postponing the Irish difficulty, and of devoting the session to the quiet fulfilment of much-needed domestic reforms, would prove futile. The Government was assailed on both sides. The Conservatives emphasised and deplored the deep responsibility the Government had undertaken in dispensing with special legislation, their chief weapon for the maintenance of order. The Irish members complained bitterly of the absence from the Ministerial programme of any curative measures, more especially of any reform of the Land Laws; while recognising the impossibility of complete or immediate legislation on this point, they demanded at least a temporary measure for delaying evictions until a more mature settlement could be arrived at.

Relief of Distress Bill.

Shortly after the close of the debate on the Address a Bill was brought in by Mr. O'Connor Power to give effect to the wishes already expressed by the Irish members. It met with the sympathy of the Government. Mr. Forster consented to embody it in a measure which was already before the House. This measure, known as the Relief of Distress Bill, was rendered necessary by the extreme distress at that time prevalent in Ireland. It was intended to continue and enlarge an Act which had been passed in the last session, giving leave for the employment of a portion of the Irish Church surplus funds in loans to landlords for relief works. It was not wholly acceptable to the Irish members. They raised the cry constantly recurring whenever Bills of this sort were introduced, that the landlords alone would get any advantage. Their opposition was quieted by an additional grant of £200,000 towards outdoor relief; and the Bill, as it originally stood, was speedily carried. Not so the new clause embodying Mr. O'Connor Power's suggestion. So vehement was the opposition of the Conservatives, that it was found

necessary to remove the clause, and to introduce it as a separate measure under the title of Compensation for Disturbance Bill.

The object of this Bill was avowedly temporary, to relax till the end of 1881, the restrictions laid upon compensation by the existing law. The Land Act of 1870 had set a limit to the compensation which a tenant could claim upon eviction for non-payment of his rent; if he owed a full year's rent, no compensation at all was due to him. The Irish saw in this a very formidable power given to the landlords. It was true that "if the rent was exorbitant" the restriction was removed; but a rent might be high without being exorbitant, and if a landlord set a high rent, and refused to lower it in a bad season, he would be able to evict without paying compensation. The Compensation for Disturbance Bill enacted that an evicted tenant had a right to compensation if he could prove that his inability to pay his rent was not caused by his own thriftlessness, but by the agricultural depression in this and the two preceding years, and that he was willing to continue his tenancy on reasonable terms. Mr. Forster defended the Bill by the assertion that the sudden increase of evictions had made it absolutely necessary; already in only half the year they had reached the number of 1073, as against 500 in the five years preceding the year 1877. It encountered a furious opposition, headed by Mr. Chaplin, who made himself the champion of the rights of property; Lord Beaconsfield's prophecy that "the Land Act would create a new Irish grievance, the *payment of rent*," was, he declared, fulfilled. He found a vigorous following. Lord Randolph Churchill denounced the Bill as the first step in a social war; Mr. Plunkett saw in it a mere political proposal, a direct confiscation in fact of the property of one class in favour of another; while Mr. W. H. Smith asked whether the Government were prepared to extend the principle to tradesmen who could not pay their rent in bad times. A striking instance of the impossibility of applying the principles of one system of land-owning to another had arisen. The Land Act of 1870 had treated the tenants as partners with the landlord, but had reserved the actual property to the landlord. If the relation of landlord and tenant was regarded in any sense as a partnership, both partners should suffer; this was the Irish view. If the landlord was the owner of the land, he should be able to let it under contract, and on failure of the contract he should resume possession; this was the landlord's view. The Liberal party, as represented by the Government, did not allow the necessity of this alternative; they still aimed at producing a compromise which should save the rights of property

Compensation
for Disturb-
ance Bill.

as understood in England. Mr. Gladstone even went so far as to say that the Bill was rather for the protection than for the destruction of the rights of property, because it enabled the Government with a clear conscience to use all the means in its power to support them. The Bill, he averred, touched only one peculiar incident of property, eviction, which had been but lately introduced into Ireland, and which, he declared (suddenly assuming the other side of the compromise), had been established fraudulently behind the back and against the rights of the occupier. Both the Premier and Lord Hartington were careful to point out that the passing of the Bill ought not to lead to a general movement against the payment of rent, because all the old means of enforcing such payments were left in the landlord's hands. The debates were long and heated, but finally, after thirteen days, on the 26th of July, the Bill was carried. A week later the House of Lords contemptuously threw it out by a majority of more than two hundred.

It is a matter of profound regret that no question of Irish policy can be discussed with reasonable and intelligent calmness. The lines of party have been marked with so much exaggeration, religion and passion have played so large a part in Irish history, years of mis-rule have created so thick a cloud of prejudice between the two countries, that difference of opinion invariably leads to exaggerated passion, which finds its expression in riot and disturbance. The persevering immobility which has constantly marked the dealings of the English Parliament, and the sudden collapse of opposition to reforms which has again and again attended the outbreak of disaffection, had unfortunately taught the Irish the double lesson that violent pressure would prove successful, and that nothing short of violent pressure would avail. The rejection of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was followed, as might have been expected, by a renewed crop of outrages; and the well-meant determination of the Government to maintain order only by the firm administration of the existing laws began to assume the appearance of an act of culpable weakness and folly. On the 25th of September, only a few days after the conclusion of the long session, Lord Mountmorres was murdered near his own house, with circumstances of extreme inhumanity. This outrage was followed in many parts of Ireland by all the worst signs of agrarian disturbance. The agents of the law were roughly handled in the execution of their duties, and shots were again and again fired into their windows. Bands of masked men burst into the houses of bailiffs and caretakers. Evicted tenants were replaced

Consequences
of the rejection
of the Dis-
turbance Bill.

upon the land by force; and if no personal violence was done to those who had paid their rent, their cattle were frequently houghed or mutilated; while hundreds of threatening letters were received by landlords and land agents. Only a fortnight after the murder of Lord Mountmorres a similar outrage was attempted near Bantry Bay; the landlord, indeed, escaped, but the driver of his car was shot.

There was a very general belief that these outrages were fomented by the Land League, although the leaders persistently repudiated the charge. However this may be, they certainly seized with avidity upon a new form of coercion as cruel as it was effective. Mr. Parnell, in one of his addresses, had thrown out a hint that farmers who refused to join or to obey the League should be shunned as lepers. The suggestion quickly bore fruit. In October a letter appeared in the newspapers from a land agent in Mayo, named Captain Boycott, narrating his experiences. All intercourse with him and his family had been absolutely stopped, no servant would remain with them, no shopkeeper would sell to them, no labourer would work on his farm. A volunteer expedition from the Orange counties, protected by 7000 troops, was required to harvest his crops and to bring him and his family to a place of safety. The newly devised system of persecution, which received its name from its first victim, was openly adopted as their chief weapon by the Land League. Conviction of any action regarded as an offence by the League was followed by a sentence of "Boycotting," which meant to its victim something little short of financial ruin. A reign of terror was established, which threatened to make the law of the Land League the paramount law of the country. The system was the more effectual because there was much doubt whether it could be regarded as an infringement of any actual law.

The crisis appeared so acute that it was generally supposed that an autumn session would be held and extraordinary powers demanded by the Government. No such course was followed. Additional troops were sent to the disturbed districts, but the Government were satisfied with attempting to strike a blow which could scarcely fail to be futile. After much consultation, the law officers declared their belief that the leaders of the Land League had gone beyond the law and had laid themselves open to legal proceedings. Their arrest was at once carried out (October 1880), but, as might have been expected, no satisfactory result followed their trial. It was with the greatest difficulty that jurors or witnesses could be found willing to risk the dangers attending

Arrest and
acquittal of
the Land
Leaguers.

the displeasure of the Land League. A verdict of acquittal was a foregone conclusion.

The opportunity was not neglected by the Opposition. Few things are more disastrous than the failure of a Government prosecution. The apparent weakness and supineness of the Liberal Ministry was an easy topic of invective. Yet Mr. Gladstone, in his speech at the Lord Mayor's dinner, had plainly stated that if it became necessary he would not shrink from having recourse to special coercive legislation. When Parliament met in January 1881 it was evident that the necessity had in fact arisen. The Government had found themselves unable to secure the rights and liberties of those who were opposed to the Land League. They were forced to acknowledge their inability; but they had no intention of entering upon the hopeless task of attempting to restore order by means of coercion alone. They felt it to be their duty to attack the causes for the discontent, of which the prevailing disorder was but the symptom. A Coercion Bill and a reform of the Land Law were both necessary. The only question to be decided was the order of precedence of the two measures. No man was more full of humane instincts than Mr. Forster; but his visits to Ireland had impressed upon him a very dark view of its condition, and he felt himself incapable of coping with the disorder, unless armed with some form of coercion. No man was more ready than Mr. Gladstone to sympathise with the Irish and to redress their grievances; but he had lived all his life amid the dignified traditions of English administration, and disorder was abhorrent to him. Under the influence of these two statesmen, the Cabinet decided that the disorder must be repressed before curative measures could be introduced.

A lengthened debate upon the Address postponed any immediate action. The Queen's speech had in a few strong words described the terrible condition of Ireland, and the necessity for additional powers to suppress disorder. It also recommended the further development of the principles of the Land Act of 1870, and the establishment of some form of county government founded on representative principles.

The debate on the Address gave occasion for the display of bitter opposition from the Irish party. Obstruction had already made its appearance in the preceding Parliament, and the length to which the debate was extended by amendments from the Irish members was generally stigmatised as a fresh exhibition of the same objectionable tactics. But it must be remembered that the speech from the throne contained a distinct indication that a

Necessity for coercion.

Irish obstruction.

strong measure of coercion would be introduced, and it was not without truth that the Irish members urged that their constitutional rights were gravely threatened, and that since the state of parties precluded any effective resistance to the Ministry, it was only by persistence that they could influence public opinion in their favour. The line taken by them throughout the debate was the assertion of the innocence of the Land League in respect to outrage, the spontaneous and universal character of the discontent which directly resulted from the rejection of the Compensation Bill, and, as a deduction from these facts, the wisdom and necessity of remedial measures before coercion was attempted; for it was possible that coercion would not be necessary, and it was certain, if applied, to render still more difficult the establishment of order.

The most striking incident of the debate was the assumption on the part of Mr. Parnell of the position of a rival leader offering terms to Government. In supporting an amendment of Mr. Justin McCarthy, to the effect "that the Crown should refrain for the present from the use of its naval, military, or constabulary forces in carrying out evictions," Mr. Parnell took the opportunity of giving a clear exposition of his views. He regarded it as necessary that the relation of landlord and tenant should disappear in Ireland; there would then cease to be any class supported by English influence, and the united people might without friction or violence obtain legislative independence. He went so far as to say that, if a fair chance of success presented itself, it was the duty of every Irishman to shed his blood for his country, and concluded by asserting that if the Government began by coercion they would have no opportunity of settling the land law, for the first arrest would be followed by a determined opposition to the payment of rent. Such language was not calculated to soften the antagonism which had now assumed a national form and affected both parties in the House, with the exception of a few of the most advanced reformers.

Immediately after the passing of the Address, Mr. Forster moved for leave to introduce his Coercion Bills, known as the "Protection of Property" and the "Arms Bill." It was the signal for a tremendous struggle, which dealt a severe blow to the dignity of Parliament and necessitated very important modifications in the procedure of the House. Whether the Irish members had been justified in the prolongation of the debate on the Address or not, they had by this time matured a system of opposition based upon the strained employment of the usages of Parliament which could

Mr. Parnell's proposals.

Stormy scenes in the House.

hardly fail to throw discredit upon the House. By speeches of inordinate length, resumed relentlessly again and again after the Chair had pointed out that the wide disquisitions were out of order, and by repeated motions for adjournment necessitating wearisome divisions, they succeeded in wasting the time of the House during a continued sitting of twenty-two hours. It was not till two o'clock on Wednesday, January 26th, that the sitting begun on Tuesday evening was brought to a conclusion. This was but an opening exhibition of the tactics of obstruction. On the 31st of January Mr. Gladstone, on being asked whether it was proposed to have another all-night sitting, replied that the vote on the introduction of the Bill must be taken at all events in that sitting. The challenge was taken up by Mr. Parnell. In a speech which was not without cogency, he declared that a prolonged sitting would not conduce to the dignity of the House, and that the Government would be no further advanced with their measure even if they sat for three nights than if they consented to an immediate adjournment on the understanding that a compromise should be effected and the debate concluded on the following day. But the English members had by this time lost their temper, and were by no means inclined to yield to the wishes of a small minority. Thus for forty-one dreary hours the debate dragged on, the House being kept up by relays, and the Chair taken sometimes by the Speaker, sometimes by other members.

It is difficult to understand the reason for the unyielding obstinacy of the majority. The powers of the Speaker had already been increased for the purpose of thwarting obstruction, and it is probable that there was a difference of opinion between the Conservatives, who desired to put in force the rules they had themselves made, and the Liberals, who desired a different method. By the new rules the Speaker had the right of "naming," and by a vote of the House "suspending" individual members. But he declined to make use of this power. In vain did Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Smith attempt to throw upon the Government the duty of setting the Chair in motion. Mr. Bright replied that the responsibility lay with the House, and not with the Government, and at the same time he indicated that the Prime Minister intended to make certain propositions which the House might discuss. At last, at nine o'clock on Wednesday morning, February 2d, the Speaker, returning to the Chair, took the matter into his own hands, and carried out a sort of *coup d'état*. Refusing to hear Mr. Biggar, who was addressing the House, he explained the necessity of his action in a few strong words, and at

once put the question of the amendment which was being debated. The amendment was thrown out by a majority of 145. He then put the main question, that leave be given to bring in the Bill, and refused to hear any further remarks on it. The Home Rulers rose, and with shouts of "Privilege" left the House. Mr. Forster at once brought up the Bill, and when the Speaker asked when the second reading would be taken, Mr. Gladstone answered decisively, "At twelve o'clock to-day." The House then adjourned for three hours' rest.

The form of the Coercion Bill, which had been a well-kept secret till the opening of Parliament, had leaked out during these scenes of disorder. It was somewhat unprecedented in its character. As explained by Mr. Forster on the 4th of February, the disorder in Ireland and the difficulty found in the administration of justice depended chiefly upon the existence of a limited number of men, without whose active participation the speeches of the Land Leaguers would have been futile enough. It was the removal of these men, whom the police knew well, and whom he stigmatised under the name of "village tyrants," at which Mr. Forster aimed. By his Bill the Lord Lieutenant was to have the power of issuing warrants for the arrest of any one whom he suspected to be guilty of treasonable or agrarian offences. The prisoner was to be treated as unconvicted, but might be detained without trial till the last day of 1882. There was no definition of the offences, and the power of arrest depended solely upon that most dangerous and elastic ground, suspicion. The Bill thus obviously placed an extraordinary power in the hands of Government. It was brought in under very peculiar circumstances.

The forty-one hours' sitting and its authoritative closure by the Speaker rendered some definite measure necessary for the furtherance of public business. And even before the adjournment on that memorable Wednesday Mr. Gladstone gave notice of a resolution, by which a motion might be made declaring the state of public business urgent; if supported by forty members, the Speaker was to put the question at once without debate; if a majority of not less than three to one supported the motion, business became "urgent" and the whole regulation of business passed into the hands of the Speaker. It was plain that this was a drastic method of destroying what had hitherto been regarded as the rights of the minority. It is true that the proportion of assents required before urgency could be declared was large enough to secure the measure from abuse under ordinary circumstances; but when there existed, as

Mr. Forster's
Coercion Bills.

Gladstone's
resolution for
suspending
members.

at the present moment, a combination of the two great parties, it seemed as though the voice of the small minority of Irishmen would be entirely quenched. It is not surprising that their opposition produced a new scene of wild disorder.

On the 3d of February the scene began. Mr. Gladstone, on attempting to bring forward his resolution, was interrupted by Mr. Dillon, whose opposition was only put aside by his forcible removal from the House by the Sergeant-at-Arms. Mr. Parnell was the next victim. He insisted upon his right to move that "Mr. Gladstone should be no

**Irish members
suspended.**

longer heard." He was named, suspended, and removed with a show of force. Again Mr. Gladstone attempted to speak, but was interrupted by Mr. Finnigan, who also was removed. During the divisions following the motions for the removal of these members the Irish had refused to vote. For thus disregarding the authority of the Chair the Speaker named them all. Their removal was voted *en masse*, and each, after saying a few words, left the House when touched by the Sergeant-at-Arms. Thirty-six members in all were suspended.

The incident gave occasion to a fine piece of eloquence on the part of Mr. Gladstone. After explaining the real value and meaning of liberty of speech, he concluded in the following words: "Character and honour are the essence of the House of Commons. As you value the duties which have been committed to you, as you value the traditions that you have received, as you estimate highly the interests of this vast empire, I call upon you without hesitation, after the challenges that have been addressed to you, after what you have suffered, to rally to the performance of a great public duty, and to determine that you will continue to be, as you have been, the mainstay and public glory of your country, and that you will not degenerate into the laughing-stock of the world."

Mr. Gladstone's resolution was carried practically without alteration. The Speaker produced a set of stringent rules for the management of the debate, and it was under these rules that the Coercion Bill was declared urgent and brought in. Strong though the new rules were, they did not prove sufficient. A discussion of four days in Committee had only settled a single sub-section of a single clause. The Speaker therefore felt it his duty to produce a still more stringent rule for putting an end to dilatory discussions in Committee. It was only by taking advantage of this new rule that the Bill got through the Committee stage by the 23d of February. No less than nineteen amendments

**Coercion Bills
passed, March
2 and 21, 1881.**

were still undiscussed, and were put silently to the vote in accordance with the new regulations. On the twenty-fourth day of the debate "The Protection of Property Bill" was passed. "The Arms Bill" after a similar troublous course was passed and became law (March 21).

The first step in their Irish programme being thus completed, the Government were able to produce the remedial measures which were to justify coercion. On the 7th of April Mr. Gladstone explained his Bill for the improvement of the Irish Land Law.

In the unceasing discussions which had arisen respecting the necessary reforms of the Land Laws there had been, as Mr. Parnell had pointed out, varieties of opinion among the reformers, which covered the wide interval

**Land Bill
introduced,
April 1881.**

lying between what was known as the "three F's" and the resumption of the land by the occupiers. Fixity of tenure, free sale, and fair rents were the programme of the one party. This formula recognised a dual ownership, but limited the right of the owner to a fixed and perpetual rent-charge on the land. The other party arguing that years of over-renting had long since fully satisfied any claim of ownership, demanded as a matter of justice the restitution of the land to the occupier; in other words, confiscation pure and simple. Seen from the ordinary English point of view, both extremes seemed to encroach largely upon the rights of property; and even the less stringent reform was an obvious assault on the principle of free contract, which is the basis of the English law. But Mr. Gladstone, and those who thought with him, believed that the doctrines of political economy were modified by the circumstances of those to whom they were applied. He recognised the fact that the Irish had never fully accepted the strict doctrine of property in land, and that the legislation of 1870 had considerably increased the value of the occupier's interest, which to the Irish mind was as completely his property as the landlord's interest was the property of the landlord. Such general confiscation as was implied in the exaggerated view of the extreme Land Leaguers was obviously out of the question. But the Government, maintaining the idea of a quasi-partnership, attempted in the Bill which was now produced to establish a permanent settlement of the rights of the two partners. To turn into written law an ill-defined though strongly felt usage requires the most careful and elaborate consideration of difficulties which might arise under a great variety of circumstances; the Bill was of necessity loaded with a mass of details. The mastery of these details shown by Mr. Gladstone, and the untiring ability and patience with which he explained or modified them, excited the

admiration even of his bitterest opponents. But the character of the Bill rendered it open to assault on all sides, and afforded an infinite number of points on which discussion might arise. In its main provisions it legalised free sale, and if not fixity, yet continuity of tenure, and something which might be spoken of as fair rent. It was this last point which offered the greatest difficulty.

If "fair rent" was not that which was arrived at by ordinary competition in the market, it was necessary either to define it (which was practically impossible) or to establish some authoritative machinery by which, if not a *fair*, at least a *judicial* rent could be settled in each case as it arose. A Royal Commission, which had lately been sitting, known as the Bessborough Commission, had reported in favour of the establishment of a Land Court; and it was the creation of such a Court which was the chief basis of Mr. Gladstone's present measure. Access to this Court was optional, open to tenants or to landlord and tenant acting in common, not to a landlord alone. Rents, when once judicially fixed, were to be unchangeable for fifteen years. Evictions during that time, except for breach of covenant or non-payment of rent, were to be rendered impossible.

The second part of the Bill was occupied with two proposals of a somewhat different character, for the purpose of alleviating the difficulties of the present crisis. The first of these proposals was "assisted emigration." The Land Commissioners were to be allowed to promote emigration by advancing money to the agents of any British colony or dependency, for the purpose of assisting poorer emigrants. The second proposal was the establishment, on a somewhat small scale, of peasant proprietorship. In order to afford assistance to occupiers and enable them to obtain possession of their holdings, the Commissioners were to be allowed to advance, on satisfactory security, as much as three-fourths of the sum required for purchase; or even directly to purchase estates for the purpose of reselling to the tenants their respective holdings, if fully satisfied both of the expediency of the step and that a sufficient number of the tenants on the estate demanded it.

Such a Bill was clearly open to a great variety of attacks. The landowners saw in it a method of lowering their rents, which they stigmatised as confiscation. "It is a Bill," said the Duke of Argyll, "by which three persons are authorised to settle the value of the whole country." To the political economist it seemed a violent assault upon one of the first principles of his science, the settlement of values by the relation of supply and demand. To the

Objections to
the Land Bill.

lawyer its details afforded problems to which no logical answer could be found, and there lay at the root of it a confusion of two principles, ownership and partnership. To the more sensible Irish reformers it appeared doubtful whether a Bill of such complexity, and falling so far short of the extreme wishes of the people, would really afford any permanent settlement of the questions at issue between landlord and tenant. To the extreme Nationalists, trained of late years by the language of their parliamentary leaders to desire the entire destruction of landlordism, not only did the means afforded for the establishment of a peasant proprietorship seem inadequate, but the mere fact that landlordism was re-established by it under fresh safeguards rendered the Bill highly objectionable. Nor were the emigration clauses to their mind; for it was an article of the Nationalist creed that the population of Ireland was not too great for the resources of the country if properly developed; the redistribution of the people, and not their removal, was the object they desired.

The Bill, thus open to reasonable question and not satisfactory to the Irish themselves, seemed to the bulk of the Conservative party an uncalled-for interference with the existing Land Law. They believed that simpler measures securing social and material improvements, with some slight increase of peasant proprietorships, were the proper means of meeting the requirements of the country.

On the other side, the majority of the House accepted the position of Mr. Gladstone. To him the situation was political rather than economical, and the questions were to be treated in that large spirit of statesmanship which accepts compromise and acknowledges anomaly, which overrides even real class interests in the pursuit of great and beneficent public objects. The necessity for the measure, he declared, was to be found in the scarcity of land wherewith to satisfy the "land hunger" which formed so strong but so abnormal an element of the character of the Irish peasant. The chief principles of the Bill were the honest acceptance of Irish ideas and customs; its main point was the establishment of a Court which should moderate and legalise those customs. This was entirely in accordance with his previous handling of the Irish question, and he was able to adduce in support of such a Court the opinion expressed by Lord Beaconsfield himself and the recommendation of two Royal Commissions.

In accordance with these various views, the various sections of the Opposition expressed their dissent from the Bill. While Mr. Gibson demanded compensation for what was nothing short of a great act

Gladstone's
reasons for the
Land Bill.

of attainder against the landlords, the Conservative party as a whole produced an amendment declaring that the House was disposed to promote the social and material improvement of Ireland "by measures for the development of its industrial resources, rather than by a measure which confuses, without settling upon a permanent basis, the relations between landlord and tenant." Lord Elcho bitterly denounced what he considered the economic heresies of the Bill; and Mr. Parnell, stigmatising it as "a miserable half remedy," refused to support it. The second reading, however, in spite of the abstention of the Irish party, was carried by 352 to 176. In fact, in presence of the disturbed condition of Ireland, most men considered the passing of some Bill of this sort as a matter of urgent necessity. It was in Committee that the real onslaught began. Night after night the details of every clause were subjected to the most minute and hostile criticism. The discussion which began on the 26th of May was not concluded till the 30th of July, on which day the third reading was taken.

During these two months of struggle many alterations and additions had been made in the Bill; but the constant skill and attention with which Mr. Gladstone encountered his adversaries enabled him to bring it out of Committee without much loss so far as its original principles were concerned. The attacks came from both sides, and to both parties in the quarrel concessions had to be made. With a natural wish to limit the action of the Bill as far as possible, the landlords, with Mr. Heneage as their spokesman, urged an amendment which excepted from its action those estates which were conducted on what was spoken of as the English system. Much of the necessity for the Bill depended on the prevalent custom which left the improvements to the tenant; but there were a considerable number of estates in which, as in England, the improvements were the work, and therefore logically the property, of the landlord. The reasonableness of the demand to exclude such estates from the new law was so strongly felt that Mr. Heneage's amendment was rejected in a full House by a majority of only 25. On some other points the Government found it necessary to yield. The most important of the concessions they made to the landlord was his freedom of access to the Land Court. By the Bill, as introduced, the Court seemed to have been regarded as an instrument for saving the tenant from exorbitant rentals; it was taken for granted that there could be no error in the other direction. The landlords now succeeded in obtaining the recognition of such a possibility, and the right to appeal

**Criticisms of
the Land Bill.**

**The Land Bill
in Committee.**

to the Court for remedy. Two important clauses which were added to the Bill were, on the other hand, concessions to the tenant. One of the burning questions of the time was the payment of arrears; so long as this weight of debt hung upon the tenant, the Nationalists declared that no just settlement was possible; contracted, as they urged, under exorbitant rents and in times of distress, justice demanded that means should be found for setting the tenant free from it. A clause was therefore added, by which the Government was to advance to the landlord half the arrears due for the bad seasons of 1878 and 1879. With this, which was more than he could by ordinary means hope to recover from his tenants, he was to be satisfied. The tenants were to repay the sum advanced by half-yearly instalments spread over fifteen years, and at the end of this time a full release of all arrears was to be given them. The second additional clause was intended to meet the widely spread belief that many leases had been obtained unfairly since 1870. The action of the Court was now made retrospective; power was given it to examine such leases, and to quash them if they proved to be unjust. The names of the three men to whom the large powers of the Land Court were to be entrusted were set out in the Bill; they were Mr. Justice O'Hagan, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. Vernon. With these important alterations and some others of a less serious character, the third reading of the Bill was carried in the House of Commons by a majority of 220 against 14. Mr. Parnell and a few of his friends, unwilling to reject entirely what was meant for a conciliatory measure, yet regarding it as thoroughly inadequate, abstained from voting.

But success in the Lower House was but half the battle; it was in the Upper House, consisting practically of landlords, that the Bill was likely to be defeated. But even there the recognition of the necessity of some such measure was so strong that Lord Salisbury, the leader of the Opposition, while heaping unmitigated censure upon the Bill, advised his followers not to reject it, but to use their ingenuity in changing it during Committee. His advice was taken, and the Bill was read a second time without division. In Committee the wrecking process began. On several very important points the decisions of the House of Commons were reversed. The method of calculating the "fair rent," the classes to whom the provisions of the Bill were to apply, the extent in the matter of time of the jurisdiction of the Court, and the difficult question of arrears, were all subjected to hostile amendments. Lord Salisbury succeeded in introducing a proviso that the Land Court, when engaged in settling

**The Land Bill
passes the Com-
mons, July 30,
1881.**

**Land Bill in
the Lords.**

a "fair rent," should leave out of the calculation any sum paid by the tenant for the "tenant right." In marking out the classes to which the Bill applied, the Commons had settled that the leaseholders should at the close of their leases enjoy the advantage secured by the Bill "to present tenants," and be allowed to bring their case before the Land Court. This extension of privilege did not meet with favour in the House of Lords; an amendment was passed removing it. The revision of leases since 1870, and the right to break any lease obtained under undue influence had, as has been already said, been given to the Land Court. Lord Cairns found little difficulty in persuading the House to remove this retrospective action. With regard to arrears, Mr. Parnell had succeeded in carrying an amendment which allowed the Court, when a tenant applied for the fixing of his judicial rent, to stay all proceedings for recovery of arrears while the case was before them. The rejection of this amendment by the House of Lords was a very direct refusal to listen to the strongly expressed desires of the Irish Nationalists. Even the purchase clauses were not left untouched. The requirement of the Bill that the consent of three-fourths of the tenants must be obtained before an estate was purchased by the Court for resale seemed to the Lords an unnecessary restriction, and was removed.

When the Bill came back to the House of Commons it was evident that it had been considerably changed. The Government determined to adhere closely to the great principles of their measure, while adopting all such amendments as appeared to be merely verbal or technical. They went so far as to accept with some modifications Mr. Heneage's rejected amendment which the Lords had restored; free sale was to be prohibited where it could be proved that the improvements on the property had been not only made, but maintained at the landlord's expense. They agreed also to make some alterations in Mr. Parnell's amendment, though they insisted on reinserting it; the limit of time during which proceedings for arrears might be delayed was changed from six months to three. Though certain small alterations were thus allowed, the amendments of the Lords were not generally accepted, and the Bill was sent back to the Upper House very much in its original form. A bitter dispute between the Houses seemed imminent, which threatened something closely approaching a deadlock. The Lords, or rather the majority of the Lords, found themselves in a dilemma. They had taken upon themselves the functions of the Opposition, and as a matter of party tactics were very unwilling to

Dispute between the two Houses on the Land Bill.

throw out the Bill, and so to hasten a Ministerial crisis. Little more than a year had elapsed since at the last general election the Liberals had been triumphantly restored to power, on the distinct understanding that a Bill to reform the Irish Land Law was to be introduced. After so short an interval the Opposition had no wish to risk renewed defeat, nor were they prepared to supply a new Ministry, even if defeat were avoided. On the other hand, the Lords could scarcely with a good grace surrender amendments which they had declared to be of vital importance. The position of the Government was almost as difficult as that of the Opposition. They might indeed withdraw the Bill, reintroduce it in some slightly altered form in the next session, and fight the question all over again; but, meanwhile, Ireland was waiting for its remedial measure. Or they might take the opportunity to dissolve and force on a new election; but, with a large majority behind them, and supported by a national verdict hardly a year old, it seemed undesirable again to appeal to the country.

However, as neither party wished to drive matters to extremity, Mr. Gladstone found it possible to adopt a third and more statesmanlike course. He determined to yield **A compromise effected.** wherever it was possible to do so without seriously injuring the Bill, and thus to give the Lords an opportunity of withdrawing with dignity from their false position. The concessions which he thought it prudent to make were no doubt important. Leaseholders, for instance, if their leases terminated after 1941, were excluded from the action of the Bill; Mr. Parnell's clause was entirely omitted; and certain rights of appeal from the judgment of the Land Court were allowed. The concessions were, at all events, sufficient to enable Lord Salisbury, while still declaring his belief in the injustice of the Bill, to assert that the two most important points he had in view, the equality of access to the Court by landlord and tenant, and the exclusion of the price paid for tenant-right in fixing a "fair rent," had both been obtained. The Lords withdrew their opposition, and the Bill passed (August 22, 1881).

The Government had chosen Ireland, or more correctly had been forced to adopt Ireland, as the field of parliamentary battle. The circumstances which had produced this result had also strained to the extreme the administrative capacity of the Cabinet. During the whole of the spring of the year 1881, while the Coercion Bill was forcing its way slowly through Parliament, the ferment in Ireland had been increasing. The trial

Increasing ferment in Ireland.

of the Land Leaguers, who had been arrested in October, had ended in their acquittal, and the country continued to be agitated by frequent meetings and fiery speeches. It was in vain that Mr. Michael Davitt, perhaps the most dangerous of the national orators, was silenced. In his case there was no need to fear the acquittal of a jury; for the term of his punishment for conduct during the Fenian troubles had not yet expired, and the language he was now using was held to be inconsistent with his position as a prisoner liberated on ticket-of-leave; he was therefore apprehended and detained without further trial. The arrest produced no good result; there was but one martyr more to feed with his injuries the enthusiasm of the Leaguers. Neither sex nor profession held aloof from the Nationalist zeal. The women of Ireland, under the presidency of Miss Parnell, formed themselves into a Ladies' Land League. The Church found a leader in Archbishop Croke of Cashel, and threw itself energetically into the movement in spite of the disapproval of the Archbishop of Dublin.

The attempted suppression of meetings and the forcible support of evictions had on more than one occasion caused bloodshed. But after the Coercion Bill was passed, and when the Government entered upon the struggle armed with the new powers which had been entrusted to them, it was supposed that no difficulty would have been found in restoring order. Unfortunately Mr. Forster was fully persuaded that outrages would at once cease upon the apprehension of a few turbulent, but inconspicuous agitators; and those who were first arrested as "suspects" under the new law were men of quite second-rate position. The power of the League had in fact increased so rapidly, that the assertion that "The Land League was the real Government of Ireland" seemed scarcely an exaggeration. For the moment, the voice of the illegitimate authority appeared to carry more weight than that of its legitimate rival. The Land League Convention, held in Dublin in September 1881, marked the climax of its power. The farmers and the priests were there fully represented, and, after declaring their belief that the Land Act had been procured entirely by the action of the League, they placed themselves unreservedly in the hands of Mr. Parnell. He delivered his verdict upon the Act in the tone of a man who was master of the situation. He bade them accept it as a mere instalment, and not as the completion of their work. Their present duty was to watch it and to try it with test cases before they consented to a general adoption of its advantages. There was no disorder in the Convention, its conduct was self-

Power of the
Land League.

Convention in
Dublin, Sept.
1881.

restrained and constitutional. The attitude it adopted towards the Government was that of a rival power, which might or might not be satisfied with the concessions made to it.

Such an attitude of self-assertion, though orderly in itself, was certainly not calculated to check the extreme disorder with which the country was still full. The leaders of the League had always declared that they were not responsible for those outrages. Their assertion was probably so far true, that they did not directly contrive them; but that they allowed them and used them for their own purposes seems certain. Such at all events was the opinion of the Government. In October, speeches of bitter recrimination were exchanged between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell. It was intolerable to Mr. Gladstone that his great effort at reconciliation should be so coldly received, and be met with such constant recurrence of disorder. He had believed that the removal of a few irreconcilable and criminal agitators would have allowed the whole people to recognise the excellence of the Land Act, and that its smooth and beneficent working would have produced peace. He could not put up with the half-hearted and critical approval of Mr. Parnell, which seemed to be preventing the fair trial of the new system. Only a few days after Mr. Parnell's reply to the indignant speech of the Prime Minister, the step was taken which neither Mr. Gladstone nor Mr. Forster had at first regarded as necessary. The leaders of the Land League were suddenly apprehended in Dublin, and placed in Kilmainham Prison (October 13, 1881). This active assault immediately produced active resistance; the Land League played its last card. An address, signed by the imprisoned Leaguers, called upon the tenants to refuse to pay any rent until their leaders were liberated. The Government met the address by a declaration of the illegality of the Land League and the suppression of all its branches; and it seemed as if this long-delayed blow was all that was necessary; the new Land Act came at once into working; the Land Court was crowded. The victory of the legitimate combatant in the struggle seemed secured.

But the policy of the Government had in reality met with no success. Agrarian outrages of the old-fashioned character, with the miserable incidents of mutilation of cattle, midnight visitation of farmhouses, rick-burning, and personal violence, all included under the general name of "moonlighting," had created a reign of terror in the western districts. Bailiffs had been murdered in Connemara; a lady had been shot as she sat by the

Arrest of the
leaders and
suppression of
the Land
League.

Reign of
terror.

side of her brother, an unpopular landlord. Fenian assassinations had occurred in Dublin itself. The arrest of Mr. Parnell and his colleagues, far from allaying the storm, only rendered it more severe by withdrawing any modifying influence which the open association of the Land League might have exercised over the more irreconcilable secret societies.

The opening of the year 1882 saw no amelioration of the crisis. In England party spirit ran high. While the Conservative orators of the Opposition found no words strong enough to stigmatise the weakness of the executive and the "policy of public plunder," the Irish party were loud in their attacks upon all forms of coercion, and threatened a perpetuation of the present disorders unless evictions and arrears were handled in a very conciliatory spirit.

Mr. Gladstone's policy was based upon the idea that his great land reform would have been allowed fair play and would prove a complete source of reconciliation, but that in the meanwhile the re-establishment of order was a matter of prime necessity. But both conciliation and coercion appeared equally ineffective.

The solution of the difficulty was not made easier when, while the address at the opening of Parliament was still under discussion, the House of Lords, acting on the advice of Lord Salisbury, thought fit to appoint a committee with a large majority of landlords to inquire into the working of the Land Act. A severer blow could scarcely have been dealt at the Prime Minister; it was impossible that he should bear it in silence. He moved and carried a resolution implying grave censure upon the action of the Lords. The two Houses seemed now to stand in direct antagonism the one to the other. Of course, the resolution was a roll of idle thunder; yet it marks a real crisis in the constitutional development of the country. Taken in connection with the action of the Lords in throwing out the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, the appointment of a committee of inquiry marks the first determined step in a policy consistently pursued by the Conservative leader. From the time of the Reform Bill of 1832, with scarcely a check, the power of the Commons had been upon the increase. History presents during that period an unbroken advance of the Democracy. It had found its voice in the House of Commons. There was every appearance of its continuing its triumphant course. But Lord Salisbury had recognised that, from a constitutional point of view, this progress was one-sided; there lay ready to hand a power sufficiently strong to check, if not to stop, the

Salisbury proposes committee of inquiry.

Renewed influence of the House of Lords.

advancing flood, to change and modify its course, though its impulse could not be wholly resisted. The constitutional power of the House of Lords, unbroken and unquestioned, though practically much in abeyance, was on certain questions especially connected with property always at his command. The reassertion by the Lords, under Lord Salisbury's guidance, of their position in the constitution becomes henceforward a marked characteristic of political life.

In the Lower House the opinion was gradually forcing itself upon the minds of all that if Mr. Gladstone's policy was to be successful, a move forward must be made on both its lines. There would be no difficulty in increasing coercion, on that point the Conservatives would certainly vote with the Ministry. It was less certain how any further step in conciliation could be carried. Yet on this point the mind of the Prime Minister was decided. He had already spoken in terms of approval of a Bill produced by Mr. Redmond, as embodying the wishes of the Irish so far as its clauses on arrears went. He had already during the debate on the Address gone even further, and confessed that he would hail with pleasure any legislation which tended to lessen the concentration of business in the hands of the Imperial Parliament, and had expressed his willingness to consider favourably any scheme of Irish self-government which left the authority of the Imperial Parliament uninjured. It would appear that he was already dreaming of Home Rule.

The first step in the direction of conciliation however encountered opposition within the Cabinet itself. The unexpected release of the three members of Parliament imprisoned at Kilmainham as leaders of the Land League was immediately followed by the resignation of Mr. Forster. A few days later Michael Davitt was also released, and it began to be whispered that some sort of compromise had been entered into with the Irish leaders, though Mr. Gladstone emphatically declared that the Government was acting on its own initiative. Mr. Forster, when explaining his resignation, laid much stress on his constant advice that no bargain should ever be made with the Land Leaguers; only after the new powers demanded by Government had been granted and had been proved successful, did he think that the experiment of releasing the prisoners might have been tried. His speech was certainly open to the interpretation that there had been some sort of bargain, and though this was again strenuously denied, it appeared that information had reached the Government which led them to hope that if the arrears were treated in the spirit of Mr. Redmond's late Bill, Mr. Parnell and his friends

Forster's resignation.

would find it possible to support the cause of order. The details of this information were subsequently brought to light during the discussion on the Arrears Bill.

It appeared that in the beginning of April Mr. O'Shea, the member for Clare, had been struck with the importance of the question of the arrears. He had an interview with Mr. Parnell, who had been temporarily released for private reasons from Kilmainham. Mr. Parnell had honourably kept his parole, and refused to mix in any political action. He however urged Mr. O'Shea to get the arrears settled on the principle subsequently incorporated in the Bills both of Mr. Redmond and of the Government. Alluding to a motion of Mr. W. H. Smith, which was afterwards withdrawn, he pointed out that the Tories had already accepted his view with respect to peasant proprietors. He believed that the "moonlighting" was the work of small farmers threatened with eviction for arrears. Mr. O'Shea wrote both to the Prime Minister and to Mr. Chamberlain on the 13th of April. From both he received a certain amount of encouragement, though no sign of any intention to make a bargain. A few days later he had an interview with Mr. Forster, and also with the prisoners in Kilmainham. He declared that in neither case, though he had successfully urged the necessity of the withdrawal of the "no rent manifesto," had any bargain for liberty been suggested. He had also received a letter from Mr. Parnell, and had shown it to Mr. Forster. The letter was a strong plea for the settlement of the arrears question, and the expression of the writer's belief that "if that question were settled upon the lines indicated, he and his colleagues were confident that the exertions they would be able to make strenuously and unremittingly would be effective in stopping outrage and intimidations of all kinds." The letter closed with the words, "The accomplishment of the programme I have sketched out to you would, in my judgment, be regarded by the country as a practical settlement of the land question, and would, I feel sure, enable us to co-operate cordially for the future with the Liberal party in forwarding Liberal principles and measures of general reform, and that the Government at the end of this session would, from the state of the country, feel themselves thoroughly justified in dispensing with further coercive measures." This letter was not satisfactory to Mr. Forster. It became even less so after the further explanations of Mr. O'Shea. According to Mr. O'Shea, it meant that "the conspiracy, which has been used to get up boycotting and outrages, will now be used to put them down," and that Mr. Parnell hoped to make use of a certain

The Kilmainham treaty.

person (probably Mr. Sheridan, a released suspect), who "under various disguises was coming backwards and forwards from Mr. Egan to the outrage mongers of the West." Much, of course, depended upon the use of the word "conspiracy." To Mr. Forster and to Mr. Parnell it had wholly different meanings. While Mr. Forster regarded it as implying, in complete corroboration of his own view, the complicity of the Land League in the late outrages, Mr. Parnell confined its meaning to an understanding among themselves of the moonlighters and law-breakers. Driven to violence by the fear of eviction, he believed that these men would under changed circumstances become eager for the maintenance of the law. The position was further complicated by the unfortunate omission on the part of Mr. Parnell, when reading his letter to the House, of the concluding words with regard to the co-operation with the Liberal party. An opportunity was at once afforded for suspicion and for an accusation of "garbling documents." But there seems no reason to question the honesty either of the Irish or of the Government, or the truth of their assertion that there was no bargain. At the same time, it must be confessed that to act upon information thus clandestinely supplied, and to pursue a line of conduct exactly in accordance with that suggested by their opponents, bears a dangerous resemblance to the acceptance of a compact, understood, though not expressed in words. Undoubtedly there was room for misapprehension. Mr. Forster's interpretation of the word "conspiracy" could easily be adopted, and the transaction be so represented as to assume the form of an arrangement with criminals, by which, in exchange for liberty and for the granting of their demands, they were not only to put an end to their criminality, but to become useful party allies. Regarded by the Opposition in this light, the transaction became known as the Treaty of Kilmainham, and afforded a fine opportunity for party invective.

Ireland was as usual the victim of party government. It has always proved impossible to carry out consistently any great experiment in the presence of bitter Parliamentary opposition. Every delay in the realisation of the expected result, every trip however slight on the part of the Administration, is at once taken up by the Opposition; and experiment, which in politics as in other matters requires cool patience and a persevering disregard of first and immaterial results, is rendered impossible. The best-intentioned Government is driven to imperfect shifts and petty improvements, which produce little else than increased disorder.

Ireland the victim of party government.

In the present instance it was inevitable that the attempt to come to terms with the Irish Parliamentary party should excite angry passion, for an event had occurred in Dublin which might well upset the equanimity even of the most phlegmatic politician.

It was generally understood that Lord Frederick Cavendish, who succeeded Mr. Forster as Irish Secretary, was to be the exponent of the modified policy of the Government; repression was henceforward to be repression of outrage, and not of political opinion. Yet this messenger of peace had scarcely set foot in the island, on Saturday the 6th of May, when as he and the Under Secretary, Mr. Burke, were quietly walking through Phoenix Park they were attacked by four ruffians and stabbed to death. The assassins escaped without detection. Seldom has any event so moved the public mind. The sudden and unexpected character of the crime, the popularity of the victims, the bitter irony of the situation, excited an unprecedented feeling of anger and sympathy. The few hours however that intervened before Parliament assembled on the Monday evening allowed time for the country to recover somewhat from the shock. There was no undignified outbreak of anger in the House, but Government accepted the lesson of the terrible crime, and setting aside all other measures however pressing proceeded at once with its "Prevention of Crimes Bill."

This Bill, introduced by Sir William Harcourt on the following day, was undoubtedly very stringent in its character. As juries could not be trusted, special tribunals consisting of three judges were to be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant; the police were to have the right of search in proclaimed districts by night and day; the Alien Act was to be so modified as to allow of the immediate arrest of suspicious strangers; and two stipendiary magistrates were to be authorised to exercise summary jurisdiction in cases of secret societies, of assaults on the police, or of intimidation. The Act was to be in force for three years.

Side by side with this measure, and pressed forward with the same haste, was the Arrears Bill, introduced by Mr. Gladstone on the 15th of May. It was practically a reproduction of the clauses with regard to arrears in Mr. Redmond's Bill. The arrangement was to be compulsory in all cases where inability to pay the arrears could be proved, where the holding was under £30 a year, and where the last year's rent had been paid. In such cases the State would make a free gift of half the arrears, and the remainder would then be cancelled. The £2,000,000 which would probably be

**Murder of Lord
Frederick
Cavendish.**

**Prevention of
Crimes Bill.**

Arrears Bill.

required to give the tenants this free start was to be supplied chiefly from the Irish Church Fund, and the residue from a special Parliamentary grant.

There was enough in these two Bills to afford opportunity for a lengthened and bitter opposition. The Irish party would accept nothing short of conciliation without coercion, and subjected each clause of the Prevention of Crimes Bill to every sort of opposition which the forms of the House allowed. It was not till after a sitting of thirty hours, and the suspension of nearly all the Irish members, that the clause with respect to the assessment of damages in the case of outrage was got through the House. And only by the application of the new rules of urgency was the Bill ultimately read the third time. It became law on the 12th of July.

**Crimes Bill
carried, July 12.**

The passage of the Arrears Bill produced no such striking incident, yet every point of objection was taken by the Conservatives. The evil of saddling the Consolidated Fund with a fresh charge, the advantages of a loan rather than a free gift to the tenants, of voluntary rather than compulsory arrangements, of a wholly new peasant proprietary rather than the perpetuation of the existing tenants, the aggravation of the breach already made in the laws of political economy, the wickedness of teaching the Irish that outrages produced concessions, aggravated by the crowning crime of the Kilmainham treaty, were each in turn urged against the Bill. The Government was however firm, and strong in numbers got their measure through the House on the 21st of July without any serious alteration.

Before it became law, difficulties arose between the two Houses similar to those which had marked the preceding year. Amendments were carried in the House of Lords which threatened to completely destroy its value. Lord Salisbury chose for his first objection its compulsory character, and proposed that the landlord should be free to refuse to compound for his arrears. This amendment virtually put into the hands of the landlord the power of limiting the efforts of the State to relieve the suffering tenants. His second amendment was to the effect that if a tenant sold his tenant right, the arrears which by the Bill would have been lost to the landlord should be a first charge upon the price received. In other words, there was to be no complete wiping out of arrears.

**Arrears Bill in
the Lords.**

It was impossible to accept these amendments; yet the crisis, considering the late events in Ireland, was so severe that it was equally impossible that the Lords should force a quarrel between the

Houses. Such a quarrel would have led to the dropping of the Bill, and even the Conservatives felt that this would be disastrous. Some slight concessions, therefore, from Mr. Gladstone proved sufficient. He introduced the necessity of a mutual notice of ten days between landlord and tenant before a case was brought into Court; and he accepted the amendment with regard to the sale of tenant right, though confining its application to seven years, and limiting the amount of arrears to be paid to half the value of the tenant right. These and some other small concessions satisfied the Lords, with the exception of Lord Salisbury; but, finding the feeling against renewed opposition too strong to be resisted, the leader of the Opposition declared that, although his objections were as strong as ever, he would not divide the House. The Arrears Bill received the royal assent on the 18th of August.

The release of the political prisoners and the changes in the Irish executive were regarded, at all events by the opponents of the Ministry, as a new departure and a change of policy. In seeking for its cause, party perversity was gratified by finding it in a scandalous treaty with outrage-mongers. Yet a more simple explanation was ready to hand. There was no new policy, and any change in the method of carrying out what had all along been the Government's object—the simultaneous suppression of outrage and conciliation of Irish feeling—was quite in accordance with the character of the Prime Minister. More than once Mr. Gladstone had the greatness to acknowledge failure, and to attempt, not always with the happiest results, to retrace his steps. And there can be little question that the government of Ireland under Mr. Forster had proved a failure. Few statesmen of modern time have suffered from so unjust a load of obloquy. To few have motives more utterly abhorrent to his real character been attributed; yet as Secretary of Ireland he had unquestionably failed. A man of gentle and affectionate feeling, he was systematically charged with cruelty. With an anxious desire to ameliorate the condition of Ireland and to treat the country with absolute justice, he became the object of the bitterest invective, and was regarded by the leaders of the Irish party as a tyrannical oppressor. From what is known of his character and aims, it appears far more probable that the cause of his failure was to be found in the twofold and almost contradictory points of view from which he faced the Irish question. The main charge against him, apart from what were merely expressions of party malevolence, was that everything he did in the way of repression was done too late. He entered upon office with

Review of
Forster's Irish
work.

a strong belief that he had but to lay his hands on a certain number of irreconcilable but somewhat insignificant foes to allow Irishmen to accept even with gratitude the offered measures of reconciliation. He could not believe that his colleagues in Parliament would lend themselves to criminal outrage. It was under the influence of this feeling that he obtained the Protection Act with its strange unconstitutional peculiarities. It was under the same influence that he employed it for months only against insignificant persons. But if he had a tenderness for the Irish, he had an unusually strong detestation of what appeared to him the mean and cowardly methods of intimidation which were rife in the country. And as by degrees it was forced upon his mind that the Land League and the outrages were connected, if not ostensibly yet in very fell reality, his hatred of oppression blazed out and got the better, at all events in expression, of the really kindly feeling which underlay it. There thus arose a widespread belief that of the two lines of policy pursued by Government, he was answerable for that which was coercive, while conciliation was attributed to Mr. Gladstone. As a matter of fact, he took a very large share both in the arrangement of the Land Act and of the subsequent Arrears Act; and throughout his letters and private utterances abundant proof is to be found that his spirit was well-nigh broken by the necessity under which, as he believed, he lay of having recourse to methods of an arbitrary character.

There is some difficulty in deciding the exact cause of his resignation. In all probability it was what appeared to him the inexcusable laxity of the Government in releasing the Kilmainham prisoners without sufficient security for their good behaviour. He said afterwards that it was because he was not furnished with more extensive powers; but there must have been some misunderstanding here, as he himself had drafted the Crimes Bill which had been placed before the Cabinet, and which with very slight alteration was introduced into Parliament.

After the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish, Mr. Trevelyan accepted the position of Chief Secretary, under Lord Spencer, the new Lord Lieutenant, both of them being members of the Cabinet. Change of policy in any large sense there was none under this change of personnel. Conciliation and enforcement of order going hand-in-hand remained, as before, the policy of the Government. But no doubt there was a modification of method. Armed with the new Crimes Act, a law of unusual stringency, and perhaps warned by the late terrible

Mr. Trevelyan
as Irish
Secretary.

experience, the executive showed a firmer front to agrarian excesses. Less determined than Mr. Forster to find close connection between the League and outrage, Mr. Trevelyan was able to give better effect to conciliatory measures. Not that there was any immediate cessation either of agitation or of outrage. On the contrary, the year was marked by a terrible succession of murders. In June, in two different places, land agents were shot from behind loopholed walls. In August a crime of unparalleled magnitude took place at Maamtrasna; a whole family of Joyces, six in number, were ruthlessly murdered because it was believed that they had some knowledge of the perpetrators of several preceding murders in that district. Even so late in the year as November an attempt was made to assassinate Mr. Justice Lawson in Dublin, and a Mr. Field was stabbed outside his own house. But, either by an improvement in the police organisation or from some other cause, the entire impunity of the murderers had disappeared. It is true that the June murderers were not discovered, but the perpetrators of the crime at Maamtrasna were convicted and condemned to death, as were also several other murderers who had hitherto escaped detection.

In the political world also there was no immediate sign of any relaxation of irritation. Following the example of previous agitators, the leaders of the Irish party found means to evade the suppression of the Land League.

A great conference was held in October in Dublin, and there upon the ruins of the old Land League a new National League was called into existence. Its objects, as put forth by Mr. Parnell, were "national self-government, Land Law reform, local self-government, extension of the Parliamentary and municipal franchises, and the development and encouragement of the labour and industrial interests of Ireland." It was thought that the attempt to form such a League would bring to light, or perhaps cause, a breach in the Irish National party. It was known that Mr. Davitt by no means agreed with Mr. Parnell on the question of land. He had adopted the theories of Mr. Henry George, and was entirely in favour of the nationalisation of land, while the nominal leader of the party would have been contented with the establishment of a large peasant proprietary. And in fact in America a split did take place. The followers of the *Irish World* henceforth spoke with some contempt of the Irish Parliamentarians. But in Ireland itself no such result followed, Mr. Davitt as usual subordinating his own views to what he regarded as the general advantage of his party. But although the improvement was not very marked, there was

National
League, Oct.
1882.

undoubtedly a general feeling that things were looking a little better under the rule of Lord Spencer and Mr. Trevelyan. The Land Court was fully and vigorously in action with very good results, and it was an encouraging symptom that the Government had been able to bring to trial and obtain evidence and conviction in cases of flagrant crime, without having had recourse to the extraordinary powers given them by the Crimes Act.

But the Government had not wholly abstained from the use of their extraordinary powers. They had been intrusted with wide powers of inquiry, even in cases where no definite charge could be alleged against any individual. The fruit of such inquiries was seen when, early in January, seventeen men were suddenly apprehended in Dublin, among them a Town Councillor of the name of James Carey. They were charged with a conspiracy to murder, and the inquiries carried on resulted in very startling revelations. Chiefly on the evidence of informers, of whom the most prominent was James Carey, the existence of a secret society, composed largely of ex-Fenians and called "the Invincibles," was brought to light. It was arranged with all the precautions usual in such societies, no member of it knew the names of the other members, and orders were dealt out by a mysterious person known as "No. 1." It became clear that during the whole of the last year the chief officials, and especially Mr. Forster himself, had been marked out for assassination, and had only escaped by strange accidental miscalculations. In the same way the perpetrators of several of the late outrages were brought to light; and at length, upon the evidence of Carey, the whole details of the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish were established. The murderers were sent to the gallows. The informer, who by his own confession was the principal instigator of the deed, saved his life for the moment, only to meet punishment at the hands of his late confederates. He was murdered before the end of the year in South Africa, where he was seeking safety.

Curiosity is naturally roused by the unfolding of secret schemes of assassination, but at this time the public interest was chiefly excited by the expectation that the inquiries in Dublin would throw light on the connection between the Land League and outrage. The evidence of the informers however failed to implicate the League as an organisation in any criminal action. There were, on the contrary, signs that the Invincibles thoroughly despised the Parliamentary methods of the Irish party. But the names of certain individual members of the League had been mentioned by the witnesses;

Arrest of the
Invincibles,
Jan. 1883.

and those who had already made up their minds upon the question saw in the evidence produced at the trial fresh proof in support of their opinion. This view found expression in a vehement attack in Parliament by Mr. Forster on Mr. Parnell in February 1883. The Dublin trials were still going on when Parliament met, and for eleven nights the Government had to stand upon the defensive as the Address was debated. The chief topics were the events in Ireland, and the ex-Secretary took the opportunity of delivering a straightforward and scathing assault upon the Irish leader, charging him in plain words, not indeed with having directly planned or perpetrated outrages, but with having connived at them, and with having never used his great influence to prevent them. Mr. Parnell's reply was not satisfactory. He avoided the real point at issue, and confined himself to bitter recrimination. The effect was to excite in many minds a confirmed belief in Mr. Forster's charges. In Ireland itself, as was to be expected, the effect was different. It merely increased the confidence felt in the national leader, and the admiration which he excited. From henceforth he assumed an attitude of uncompromising hatred to the Ministry, rejecting all idea of conciliation, and declaring that by means of the Irish vote he held the fate of English parties in his hand. Never had Mr. Parnell been more powerful. Even the voice of the Church was raised against him in vain. On presenting him with a great national testimonial (December 11, 1883), his friends found opportunity to declare the futility of the interference of Rome; and, before the year was over, even the sacred territory of Ulster, so long the home of Orange influence, was invaded, and Mr. Parnell's chief lieutenant, Mr. Healy, succeeded in capturing a vacant seat at Monaghan. During the remainder of Mr. Gladstone's tenure of office, although Ireland was far from being in an orderly or satisfactory condition, there was a lull in the extreme forms of agitation.

The ever-present and absorbing difficulties of the Irish question had arisen somewhat unexpectedly, and were the more unwelcome because the hands of Government were already fully occupied with several critical questions of foreign policy. It was on foreign policy that they had chiefly attacked their predecessors; and it was the reaction against the too exclusive attention which Lord Beaconsfield had given to the extension of English prestige which had been the primary cause of the fall of his Government. Mr. Gladstone, if he was to gratify his more fervid supporters, was almost bound to modify what they had again and again declared

Forster's
speech against
Parnell, Feb.
1883.

Mr. Glad-
stone's foreign
policy.

to be the ill-judged imperialism of the late Ministry. Yet some measure of continuity is absolutely necessary in transacting business with foreign countries; nor indeed do the traditions of party government in England allow, upon every change of Ministry, of a reversal of the course of foreign policy, or even of any serious interference with it. It is only slowly and unostentatiously that a desired change of policy can be introduced. Mr. Gladstone's Government* could act only within the limits of this restriction.

In Afghanistan alone was any entire change of policy visible. Already in an earlier chapter (vol. iv., page 544) the history of the course of events has been so far forestalled that there is no need to pursue the subject further. All idea of occupying any part of the country, or advancing the frontier beyond the limits of the mountains, or of establishing a permanent protectorate, was abandoned; and after some difficulty, some disaster, and some stirring deeds of arms, it was found possible to withdraw the English troops, to allow the authority of the Ameer, Abdurahman, to be established, and to rely on the friendship of an independent State, rather than on the immediate exercise of English authority, for security against the advance of encroaching Powers.

There still remained three questions of considerable difficulty. While the Foreign Office found its hands full, with the attempt to bring the Eastern question to a satisfactory conclusion, and with the delicate diplomacy rendered necessary by international intervention in Egypt, the Colonial Office was met by ever-increasing difficulties in South Africa. In all these cases the Government at first accepted the state of things as they found it. With the Turkish question they were fairly successful. In Egypt and in South Africa events happened which continued to occupy their attention for some years; and the policy they pursued in handling these events was very different, and led to very different results.

The Treaty of Berlin, the consummation of the foreign policy of the late Ministry, had excited bitter invectives from the Liberal party; but there were certain parts of that Treaty with which they heartily agreed. They had, indeed, no sympathy with the Anglo-Turkish agreement, in so far as it included the acquisition by England of territory in the East or the guarantee of Turkish dominions. But they regarded as of the first importance the conditions which were appended to these engagements, and the increased responsibility for good government which they laid upon the Porte. They had no idea of upholding a one-sided

Enforcement of
the Treaty of
Berlin.

bargain. If they were bound by national honour to maintain agreements entered into by their predecessors, they were also bound to insist on the fulfilment of the accompanying stipulations. It thus became a primary object of their policy to compel Turkey to throw aside its dilatory disregard of the duties laid upon it by the Berlin Treaty. The instrument by which they intended to apply coercion to Turkey was the united voice of Europe.

The Treaty had required improved government in Armenia, and considerable cessions of territory both to Montenegro and Greece; but there was no sign that the Porte was likely to fulfil its duties in any of these respects. In order to hasten its action, it was thought desirable to send out an ambassador of more than common authority. The mission was entrusted to Mr. Goschen. Though he had found himself debarred from joining the Ministry by his scruples with regard to the extension of the franchise to the agricultural labourer, which was a part of the Government programme, there was no reason why his great ability should be allowed to rust in idleness. A fitting employment was found for him as Envoy Extraordinary at Constantinople. None of the stipulations of the Treaty had been properly carried out. There was no improvement in the general administration. The Kurds were still raiding in Armenia, and destroying villages by the hundred. The promised gendarmerie had not been created. Brigandage was rife. As to the Greek frontier, no sort of agreement seemed likely to be arrived at; while all mention of withdrawal from the ceded districts in the neighbourhood of Montenegro encountered bitter opposition from the Mahomedan Albanians, certainly not without the connivance of the Porte. Mr. Goschen's instructions were to press upon the Sultan, without open threat, yet with a distinct indication that there was something behind, the absolute necessity of putting an end to his procrastination. This "something" was the European concert, which was beginning at length to become a reality.

**Action of the
European
Concert.**

A conference was held at Berlin, and the representatives of the Powers found themselves so far in agreement as to be able to join in an identic Note, informing Turkey that their object in assembling in conference was to determine finally the proper line of frontier between Turkey and Greece. They proceeded to carry out their work harmoniously; and in July the frontier on which they had agreed was marked out and communicated to the Porte. It was also found possible to maintain unbroken the concerted action of Europe on the question of the cessions to be

made to Montenegro, although this question was beset with greater difficulties. The rulers of Turkey were now, as always, very loath to admit the interference of Europe; and it cannot be denied that there was much weight in the excuses urged by them to cover their determination to resist it as long as possible. It was only natural that they should resent being deprived, entirely without their sanction, of considerable portions of their territory. The opposition of the Albanians was also a very real obstacle to the completion of the cessions; the semi-independent tribes had formed themselves into a national league, numerous and warlike enough to become very formidable. With some difficulty the conflicting views of the European Powers were brought into agreement by the substitution of the district of Dulcigno for the districts mentioned in the Treaty of Berlin, and the Porte was invited to join the Powers in giving effect to the treaty thus modified. The reply, given in August, was not satisfactory. Turkey consented in principle to the cession of Dulcigno, but declined to join in any forcible attempt to coerce its Albanian subjects.

In order to bring matters to a point, it was thought necessary that a great combined naval demonstration should be organised. Restricted by a declaration of disinterestedness, which now formed the usual initial step in such operations, the joint fleet assembled in September 1881, under the command of Sir Beauchamp Seymour. It did not at first produce the expected result, for a change of ministry in Constantinople placed in office men still more determined to resist than their predecessors had been. So ineffective indeed did the demonstration appear, that Lord Salisbury allowed himself to say of it, that "if six washing-tubs with the flags of the different nations had been sent to the Adriatic, they would have produced as much effect." Nor was he much exaggerating the facts. When the English admiral negotiated with the Prince of Montenegro for an advance of his troops upon the disputed provinces, in co-operation with the fleet, he was told that the Prince not unnaturally declined to risk a Turkish war without a guarantee of assistance from the European Powers. But when the admiral applied to the Powers, he found that not one of them was willing to second any active measure. The idle threat of the combined fleet only served to strengthen the hands of the Porte, and called forth a vigorous reply, in which the Sultan assumed a dignified tone of injured innocence, and demanded his right to exercise his sovereignty unfettered on all the points at issue.

The diplomacy of Europe, threatening but afraid to strike, seemed

to have been entirely abortive. Yet most unexpectedly within a week an entire change occurred. The reason is not clear. It may have been a threat on the part of England to sequester the revenues of Smyrna and other ports. It may have been the promise of France and Germany that if Duleigno was yielded the more disastrous effects to be apprehended from the naval demonstration might be avoided. At all events, on the 26th of November the Turkish general, Dervish Pasha, having fought his way into Duleigno, surrendered it to Montenegro; and the object of the demonstration having been thus obtained, the combined fleet at once dispersed.

Still more complicated was the solution of the difficulty with Greece.

**Settlement of
Greek
difficulty.**

There were three parties in the quarrel. The Powers demanded the new modified frontier settled by the Berlin Conference; Turkey insisted on a still more restricted cession; Greece demanded the performance in full of the Berlin Treaty. That little country had assumed a most warlike attitude. The Minister, Trioupis, too peaceful in his tendencies to suit the popular feeling, was driven from office, and Comoundouros put in his place. To avoid war seemed impossible. Both Turkey and Greece were rapidly collecting troops on the frontier; an attempted arbitration was rejected. It seemed as though the Powers would be called upon either to sit idly by while war was waged, or to use their strength to coerce Greece in whose interest they were supposed to be acting. At length however the Conference of Ambassadors, which continued to sit at Constantinople in constant negotiation with the Porte, succeeded, under the lead of Mr. Goschen and the German ambassador, in marking out a new frontier by which the whole of Thessaly and a portion of Epirus was ceded to Greece; while the great bone of contention, the fortress of Janina, was left to Turkey. It was then formally intimated to Greece that unless this frontier was accepted, no assistance could be expected from Europe. The Greek Cabinet yielded to this pressure, but only under protest. The way was further cleared by a complete victory of Dervish Pasha, which broke up the formidable Albanian League. A Convention was at length signed, and by November Greece occupied its newly acquired territory. Thus, in spite of a long delay, in spite of the Opposition jeers which had constantly mocked the slow course of their diplomacy, the Ministry succeeded in making good their policy. The European concert remained unbroken; war had been avoided; and, though with some important modification, the stipulations of the Berlin Treaty had been enforced.

The attitude of the Porte in the Egyptian difficulties, which arose immediately afterwards, was the natural result of the means by which this success had been reached. There is no difficulty under the circumstances in understanding the desire of the Porte to assert its sovereignty in Egypt, its extreme unwillingness to admit European interference, and its lukewarmness in using its influence and arms for the purpose of restoring order. No less natural was the wish of Lord Granville and the English Cabinet to restore the self-respect of the Turkish Government, and, by acknowledging and making use both of its influence and arms in Egypt, to attempt to remove the soreness caused by the late events.

The Conservative Government had left its successor a difficult problem in Egypt. The great financial interests at stake had induced the European Powers to interfere in the country, to restrain the wild misgovernment and spendthrift extravagance of Ismail. It had however been generally acknowledged that France, as the great Mediterranean Power with an Egyptian connection of long standing, and England, as the ruler of India, had more than mere financial interests at stake in the well-being of Egypt. An agreement had been made by which a joint control exercised by France and England had been established. Ismail having been removed from the throne in June 1879, it was under this dual superintendence that his son Tewfik was called upon to govern his dominions. There was a strong feeling in England in favour of the assumption of some more complete command in the country, either by direct annexation or under some form of protectorate; but, on the other hand, there was among a large section of the Liberals a dislike to any addition to the responsibilities of the empire. It was between these two extremes of party feeling that the new Ministry had to steer their way. They accepted at first, in this as in other cases, the action of their predecessors. But they refused to go a step beyond it. Their efforts were directed to honest co-operation with France, in carrying out a work intrusted to them by the European Powers. This work they regarded as the supervision of the Egyptian Government. They would listen to no suggestion of taking any part of that Government upon themselves. It is obvious that the line they adopted was in the last degree critical. Differences of opinion might at any moment arise between themselves and their French colleagues; the direction of a Government by moral persuasion, and without the use of force, is likely either to be ineffective or by gradual steps to lose its purely persuasive character. It took nearly the whole of their tenure of power, a period of checked

fortune, of much disaster and much mismanagement, to clear away these difficulties and to place England in a position to carry out successfully its task of Egyptian regeneration.

As has been said, it was upon financial grounds that Europe had interfered. Before any reforms in administration or justice could be carried out, something like equilibrium had to be established between the revenue and the expenses. The first great step in this direction was made when the International Commission of Liquidation was appointed in April 1880, and when, on its report in July, the Law of Liquidation was promulgated. This law, which, although it has been modified, is still the basis of the financial arrangements of Egypt, was virtually a composition on the part of Egypt with its creditors on terms dictated by the great Powers. The essential principle of the arrangement was the division of the revenue into two portions, one of which was to be paid to the International Commission of the debt, or, as it was called, the "Caisse de la dette;" the other was devoted to the expense of the administration. The various debts were consolidated under four heads, and the interest payable on them to the bondholders was limited to a sum which it was conceived that Egypt could afford to pay. The amount to be spent on administration was also limited to what was regarded as the proper expenditure of the country. Should there be a surplus in the receipts of the Caisse, the Government had no right to share it; should there be a surplus in the administrative revenue, the Caisse had certain claims upon it. This law was a long step forward, and restored the financial solvency of the country. At the same time, the limit set to expenditure, and the claims of the Caisse (an international body), raised an obstacle in the way of large reforms, and placed the country in a very dependent position with regard to the Powers of Europe. This want of independence was still further increased by the agreements between Turkey and the various European States, known as "The Capitulations;" for the capitulations were held to apply to Egypt as a part of the Turkish Empire.

Originally privileges necessary for the safety of foreigners in the presence of a powerful and unscrupulous Government, the Capitulations had become, as the balance of power changed, serious obstacles in the way of administrative reformation. The exemption of foreigners from taxation, and the necessity of the co-operation of the Consuls in all actions of the police with respect to foreigners, were formidable interferences with the natural rights of an independent nation. It is not unreasonable to suppose that, in

Financial
reforms in
Egypt.

spite of the improvement in their financial position, in spite of important reforms in the methods of collecting the taxes, and the substitution of ordinary European processes for the violence of unchecked despotism, intelligent Egyptians might feel bitterly the dependence in which they were placed. And no doubt there was a party among the statesmen and wealthier inhabitants which saw with great dislike the constant interference and employment in high places of foreign officials. It was not however from such men as these, but from the leaders of the army, that the first interruption to what appeared to be the successful course of the new administrative arrangements came.

The army, like the State, was suffering from outside interference; the higher places were filled by Turks and Circassians; the economical efforts of the Dual Control had driven many officers into enforced retirement. At all events the military agitators put themselves forward and were for the time regarded as the leaders of a national party; but the movement rapidly degenerated, and in the hands of ignorant soldiers became an anarchical attack upon all that was best and most progressive in the country, and finally assumed the form of an intolerant assault upon Christianity in favour of Mohamedanism. Early in the year 1881, and again in July, a spirit of insubordination showed itself among the superior officers of the Egyptian army. Various changes in the Ministry were made with a view of satisfying them, but the discontent continued to smoulder until, in September, several regiments broke out into open revolt under the leadership of Ahmed Arabi. Arabi was one of the colonels who had been implicated in the earlier disorders, and there seems little doubt that it was the belief that the Khedive and his Ministers continued to cherish a determination to wreak their vengeance on him which drove him and his followers to their violent courses. Though he at first acted courageously enough, Tewfik's heart failed him at the critical moment, when he found himself surrounded by armed mutineers. He bent to the storm, and dismissed his Minister, Riaz Pasha, from office. With much reluctance Cherif Pasha, the Minister demanded by the insurgents, accepted the vacant position, charging himself with the duty of establishing a constitution, and at the same time increasing the army from 12,000 to 18,000. He insisted, on the other side, upon the withdrawal of the military chiefs from Cairo, and declared his intention of maintaining all international engagements, including the Dual Control. The conditions were fulfilled. The Chamber of Delegates was summoned in December, Arabi and his

Arabi's revolt,
1881.

The "Capitulations."

confederates withdrew for awhile from Cairo. Probably Cherif had looked for the support of the Chamber in assisting him to establish a really national movement. But the assembled Delegates not unreasonably regarded as useless a constitution which deprived them of all financial power. They demanded for themselves the right of drawing up the Budget. The political agents of the two predominant European Powers considered this a fatal attack upon the position of the Dual Control, to the maintenance of which Cherif was pledged. An ill-judged Note, communicated by France and England, raised in the mind of the Egyptians the idea that active interference was contemplated; its effect was the consolidation of the National party and the determination of the Delegates to cling to what they regarded as their financial rights. It was in vain that Cherif admitted Arabi himself to his Ministry as Under Secretary of War; the opposition was too strong for him, and, honourably anxious to maintain the pledge he had given to the Powers, Cherif found it necessary to resign. A Ministry in which Arabi held the post of Minister of War was called to office under Mahmoud Sami, a man who shared Arabi's views. The army and the extreme Nationalists thus secured a complete triumph.

But the movement had now entered upon a downward course; for there are abundant signs that Arabi was acting with support from Constantinople, while one of the first objects of the real National party had been the exclusion of Turkish influence from Egypt. Nor were proofs wanting of the disastrous results of the military triumph. Anarchy began to spread throughout the country, and the position of the European and Christian population became in the last degree precarious.¹

Such was the state of affairs which the English Government was called upon to face. Their policy with respect to Egypt was of course subjected to their general foreign policy. Their chief objects at this time were the maintenance of the European concert, which they regarded as the best machinery for the settlement of international complications, and within this, and of the first importance, the maintenance of friendship with France. As far therefore as Egypt was concerned, they felt it undesirable to act in any way except as the agent of the European Powers, or to thwart the wishes of France if it could possibly be avoided. The joint control, the outcome of a compromise between the interests of France and England, had therefore to be carefully maintained; and during the first months of the new Ministry the two countries had worked hand in hand with considerable success. The Arabist movement now

Gladstone's
Egyptian
policy.

threatened to disturb this amicable arrangement. An agitation which could assume with so much plausibility the title of a Nationalist movement could not but appeal to the sympathies of the English Liberals; while the French, who were credited (and probably correctly) with less interest in the well-being of Egypt than in the advantage of French bondholders, were eager for the suppression of a disturbance which threatened financial prosperity. Though the agents of both Powers on the spot seemed to hope that the quarrel between the Chamber of Delegates and Cherif might be regarded as a purely constitutional struggle, calling for no outside interference, Gambetta, who had lately taken up the reins of office in France, made up his mind that the action of the Chamber was leading to ruin, and that strong measures were necessary to check it. He urged upon the English Ministry the presentation of a joint Note, assuring the Khedive that he might "trust to the united efforts" of England and France "to withstand the causes of the external or internal complications threatening the existing regime in Egypt." Such a Note was not in accordance with the avowed policy of England. In issuing it the Ministry went beyond their mandate from Europe; they took a step which might easily cause difficulties with other Powers, and which was contrary to the prevalent feeling in favour of assuming as little responsibility as possible in the direct government of Egypt. After some hesitation however the Government yielded to their fear of breaking with France, and the joint Note drafted by Gambetta was sent to the Khedive, with the disastrous results already mentioned.

It also gave an opportunity to the Sultan to protest against the unauthorised action of the two Powers in a matter which properly belonged to him as Sovereign. The protest was disregarded by Gambetta; but it was not, apparently, without its effect on Lord Granville, for in January he wrote to Lord Lyons that he wished to maintain the rights of sovereign and vassal as between the Sultan and the Khedive, and that if armed intervention were necessary, Turkish intervention, under close restrictions, would be the most desirable form. The idea of restoring order by the interposition of Turkey was however quite contrary to the views of France; affairs in Tunis had lately strained almost to extremity its good relations with the Porte. The sudden fall of Gambetta's Ministry (January 27, 1882) somewhat altered the position; the desire for active intervention disappeared, and the dread of Turkish intervention became even stronger. A rift had obviously opened between the policy of England and France.

Rift between
English and
French policy.

Meanwhile events in Egypt were hastening onward. A serious incident occurred in May 1882, leading to a breach between the Khedive and his Ministers. A large number of officers had been rewarded for their revolutionary services by promotion, but many Circassians had been omitted from the list of the favoured. They were now accused of having formed a conspiracy to put Arabi to death. Some fifty were apprehended. Tried in secret, and undefended, the greater part of them were exiled for life. It is said that this was but the beginning of a general proscription, and that 300 other names had been already added to the list of victims. The Khedive commuted the sentences of the Circassian officers, and there can be little question as to the rightfulness of this course. But there was a fatal blot in the manner in which the Khedive acted; he had been too evidently under the influence of the English political agent, who had even insisted on being present when the pardons were signed. This obvious interference of the foreigners produced a complete breach between the Khedive and his Ministers. On the 25th of May, immediately after this violent quarrel, emboldened by the arrival of ironclads in Alexandria, the French and English Agents, declaring that they acted in the name of their respective Governments, presented a so-called Ultimatum, demanding the exile of Arabi, with two of his officers, and the resignation of the Ministry. The Khedive received the Ultimatum without the knowledge of his Ministers. In thus acting, he had no doubt infringed the constitution. His Ministry, already estranged, seized the opportunity, and at once resigned (May 26). Great was the excitement caused by this step. From the army, from the Ulemas, and from the people petitions streamed in on the Khedive demanding the restoration of the fallen National Ministry. The demand, backed as it was by the army with an open threat of extreme violence, was irresistible. Arabi and his friends returned in triumph (May 27), and were absolute masters of the situation. The threat was no idle one, for on the 30th of May Mr. Cookson, the English Consul-General, had written to Lord Granville, "Alexandria is in continual danger" of being stormed by the soldiery."

Riots in Alexandria, June 11. On the 11th of June the danger became a reality. There was a popular outbreak, in which Mr. Cookson was severely wounded, and more than 200 Europeans killed. It became necessary to take measures for the restoration of order.

Already (May 21), in view of the possible danger to the lives of the Europeans, French and English ironclads had been despatched to Alexandria. While agreeing in this step, the French Ministry had

made it a condition that the Porte should abstain from interference, but they had so far come into the views of England that they had waved their objection to a European Conference. The invitations were actually issued on the 1st of June, but not before Sir Edward Malet had tried the effect of an appeal to Turkey. He requested the Sultan to use his authority as Suzerain for the restoration of order. Nothing, except a European Conference, could be more distasteful to the Porte, which had hoped to increase its influence in Egypt by covert support of Arabi. To stop his action seemed suicidal; but to be obliged to do so by the combined action of Europe would be worse. In dread therefore of the threatened Conference, the Porte despatched a commissioner, Dervish Pasha, who reached Egypt just before the Alexandrian massacre. **Arrival of Dervish Pasha, June 8.** His presence produced no good result. He refused to take any responsibility, as he was without troops, and instead of exerting his authority for the active suppression of disturbance, he actually allowed the duty of restoring order after the massacre to be placed in the hands of Arabi himself. It was plain that, so far from exerting any controlling influence, the Turkish suzerainty to which Lord Granville had trusted was a mere empty name, without influence either moral or physical. There seemed nothing left but the use of forcible intervention, ordered or allowed by the Conference.

The Conference, which met at the end of June, began by passing a self-denying protocol, in which the Powers pledged themselves to aim at no separate advantage by their joint action. Then, declaring that moral influence had failed, it requested the Sultan to supply the necessary force. He at once joined the Conference, from which he had hitherto held aloof, and accepted the proposal. But the work of the Conference was in fact nugatory; events had been too quick for it.

Arabi, who had collected his troops round Alexandria, had begun to erect fortifications there which threatened the British fleet. Again and again the Khedive, Dervish Pasha, and Admiral Seymour had warned him to desist. At length the Admiral's patience was exhausted, and he proceeded (July 11) to carry out his threat of bombardment. The other foreign ships, including those of France, having already left the harbour, the work fell exclusively upon the English. Though Arabi's resistance was firmer than had been expected, the bombardment was successful and the batteries were silenced. The English sailors on landing found that the army had been entirely withdrawn; but the Admiral, without troops, had no means of following up his success. **Bombardment of Alexandria, July 11.**

Wild riot and destruction raged for several days; the loss of life and property was enormous. Order was at length restored. But, beyond the occupation of the city, which as a matter of course had resulted from the bombardment, no advantage appeared to have been gained; the army had not been defeated, it was still mutinous, and had to be reckoned with.

The policy of non-intervention, culminating in so violent an action as the bombardment of Alexandria, had no lack of bitter and indignant critics. It is in truth difficult to characterise as a policy action which appears to have depended so much on the events of the moment. It would seem however that Lord Granville, though seduced for awhile by the eagerness of Gambetta, had set before himself a line of conduct which, if open to the charge of weakness, was yet fairly consistent. The general drift of this policy was the establishment of a European Conference, at whose instigation Turkey as the Suzerain Power was to be advised to intervene in the cause of order. But though the policy may have been consistent in theory, it had not been consistent in practice. The abstention from interference had not been real; the hand of the English agent had been constantly felt. And it is impossible to acquit the English Government of having suffered a movement to gather strength when they were all along determined to destroy it, and of having ultimately found themselves driven to active intervention without having in any way prepared the means for making it effective.

The first blow once struck however there was no hesitation. A vote of credit was obtained from Parliament (July 27), a portion of the Reserves were called out, and troops were despatched as speedily as possible, to what was evidently the scene of an approaching war. M. de Freycinet, the new French Minister, also demanded a vote of credit. But the opinion of France was strong against interference, the vote of credit was not passed, and M. de Freycinet resigned. The French Assembly by this action declared plainly its disinclination to take any further active share in the quarrel. In the hands of the English alone the campaign was carried out with unexpected success. The military organisation, as reformed by Mr. Cardwell and ably managed by Mr. Childers, proved fairly efficient. Sir Garnet Wolseley was able to carry out his operations almost exactly in accordance with his carefully pre-arranged plan. With extreme secrecy, and after a feigned concentration in Aboukir Bay, he brought his troops through Port Said and the Suez Canal to Ismailia, where he was joined by a contingent from

Failure of Lord Granville's policy.

Sir Garnet Wolseley's expedition.

India, bringing up his forces to some 40,000 men. Making the canal his base, he drew Arabi away from the more fertile and highly populated parts of the country, and, after a series of skirmishes with the object of securing the fresh-water canal, finally defeated him at Tel-el-Kebir, September 13, 1882. The blow was decisive and final. Troops were at once launched in pursuit, Cairo was entered, and Arabi taken prisoner. His army disbanded itself, and the soldiers wandered off to their homes. It had been a brilliant piece of work. In the words of Sir Garnet Wolseley's despatch, "the army in twenty-five days had effected a disembarkation at Ismailia, had traversed the desert, had occupied the capital of Egypt, and had fortunately defeated the enemy four times."

It was no longer a work of destruction that was needed, but a work of reconstitution. The defeat of the army at Tel-el-Kebir and the capture of Arabi had destroyed the only power capable for the moment of governing the country. The Khedive and his Ministry (the rightful representatives of the Government) were left powerless. It became a matter of urgent necessity that in some way or other order should be restored, and the lost powers of government replaced in the hands of their legitimate owners. It became a question whether England should undertake the work. In their own interest most of the European Powers desired that Egypt should be well governed, or at any rate solvent. They were willing enough that England, to whom, as they recognised, peace in Egypt was a matter of vital importance, should be at the expense and trouble of carrying out the work of re-establishment, which was properly speaking the duty of all the Powers. The destruction had been the work of English arms; it seemed only fitting that the labour of reconstruction should also fall to England. Yet the position was quite anomalous. It was by a sort of chance that the English Government had found themselves involved in a serious war. They had drifted into an armed intervention, driven by the force of circumstances and not by any will of their own. They had not acted as one of the members of the Dual Control in alliance with France. They had not acted as the mandatory of the general will of Europe. They could no longer claim to be the agents of the European concert. Their help had not been asked for by the Khedive; on the contrary, the army crushed at Tel-el-Kebir had called itself the Khedive's army.

It was necessary to clear up this anomalous position. One fact was plain—Egypt was conquered. The natural alternative seemed to lie between a complete annexation of the conquered country and an

Defeat of Arabi.

Reconstitution of Egypt.

open declaration of a Protectorate. No Liberal Government could contemplate such a step as annexation, nor would the popular feeling have allowed it. But the establishment of a Protectorate seemed both an effective and a possible measure. No opposition was to be expected of a formidable character, except perhaps from France. In Egypt itself the Protectorate would have been warmly welcomed; and there could be no question as to the impetus which the presence of an English Resident, the representative of the protecting Power, would have imparted to the realisation of the contemplated reforms. But the English Government, wisely or unwisely, preferred a far more difficult policy, which appeared to them more consistent with the views they

England
assumed the
position of
adviser.

had already declared. They determined to occupy the position of adviser to the Egyptian Government, which should itself carry out a national reform. In a circular addressed to the great Powers in January 1883, Lord Granville thus explains the policy of his Government: "Although," he says, "for the present a British force remains in Egypt for the preservation of public tranquillity, her Majesty's Government are desirous of withdrawing it as soon as the state of the country and the organisation of proper means for the maintenance of the Khedive's authority will admit of it. In the mean time the position in which her Majesty's Government are placed towards his highness imposes upon them the duty of giving advice with the object of securing that the order of things to be established shall be of a satisfactory character and possess the elements of stability and progress." Such an attitude has in it something of hollowness. The desire to educate the Egyptians, to raise them till they are fit for self-government, and then to leave them alone, is admirable. But advice, to be of value in such circumstances, must be taken. If it is not taken, it must be forced upon the recipient. And this became apparent when exactly a year later Lord Granville wrote to Sir Evelyn Baring, the Consul-General: "It should be made clear to the Egyptian Ministers and Governors of provinces that the responsibility which for a time rests on England obliges her Majesty's Government to insist on the adoption of the policy which they recommend, and that it will be necessary that those Ministers and Governors who do not follow this course should cease to hold their office." It is difficult to see how a giver of compulsory advice differs from a Protector, except in the looseness with which his responsibilities hang on him.

Whether the attitude thus assumed was a wise one or not, the practical work of reconstitution was taken up in earnest. Lord Dufferin

was despatched in November 1882 to examine the whole situation, and to lay the groundwork of the various necessary reforms. He rapidly removed the obstacles from his way. The Dual Control ceased at the request of the Egyptian Government, and in spite of the opposition of France. The trial of Arabi, which had been a cause of warm dispute between the Egyptian Ministry and England, was brought to a conclusion. The secret and vindictive process by which his countrymen wished to deal with him had been withstood by the English Ministry, who demanded for him at least an open trial. Lord Dufferin arranged a compromise. Arabi pleaded guilty of rebellion before a Court Martial, and was sentenced to death, a sentence immediately commuted by the Khedive into deportation to Ceylon. This act of grace was not performed without a Ministerial crisis; Riaz Pasha and most of the Ministry resigned, but fortunately Cherif continued to hold the Premiership. With his patriotic co-operation the reforms quickly began to assume shape. A financial adviser, Sir Edgar Vincent, was appointed. Steps were taken for the creation of a small Egyptian army under General Evelyn Wood. A native constabulary was raised under General Baker. Mr. Clifford Lloyd, who before long proved too energetic for his place, set to work at the establishment of a police force, and the reform of the prisons and hospitals. Public works were placed under Captain Scott-Moncrieff, who busied himself chiefly with improvements in irrigation; and over the judicial reforms Sir Benson Maxwell was appointed with the title of "Procureur-General of the Native Tribunals."

Lord Dufferin's
reforms in
Egypt.

But all these promising reforms were suddenly checked for a time. A fearful epidemic of cholera swept over the country, finding no less than 30,000 victims; and before the Government had recovered from the paralysis thus caused, the appearance of the Mahdi in the Soudan compelled it to turn all its attention in that direction. It would seem that here the real weakness of the position which the English Government had chosen became apparent. For while, by the presence of English troops and the employment of English Ministers and superintendents, the Government at home were obviously charging themselves with the duty of re-establishing Egypt, they positively refused to accept any responsibility with regard to events in the Soudan. Fully conscious of the inability of Egypt to hold its extended empire, they did not insist on such a diminution of the area of the country and such a concentration of its forces as seemed to be rendered necessary by its diminished

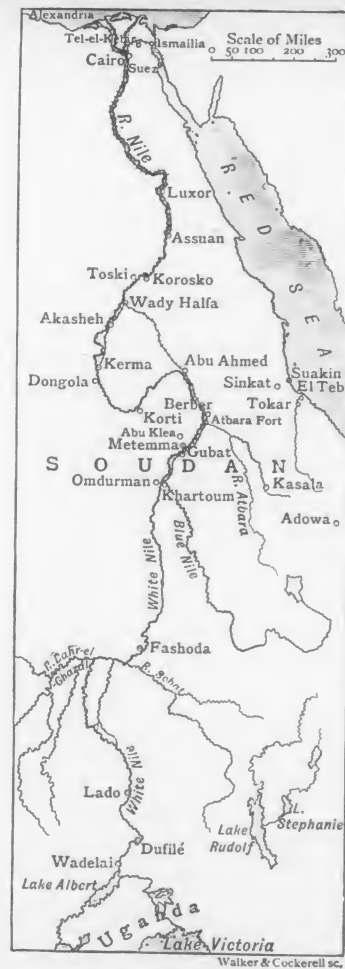
Appearance of
the Mahdi in
the Soudan.

power. They allowed the Egyptian army, under Hicks Pasha, to embark on the hopeless project of the reconquest of the Soudan, only to meet with entire annihilation at the hands of the Mahdi, November 5, 1883. Then, when too late, the pressure of England being at last brought to bear, the Egyptian Ministry under Cherif resigned, Nubar Pasha succeeded to his place, and the evacuation of the Soudan was determined on.

It was an operation of the most extreme difficulty, especially as the English Government clung to its determination of withholding armed assistance to the Egyptians. A man was found whose character and antecedents afforded some hope of his ability to save the situation. General Gordon, who had previously ruled Upper Egypt with success, proved willing to undertake the withdrawal of the scattered garrisons whose existence was threatened by the advance of the Mahdi. Trusting to his own unequalled power of influencing half-civilised races, he undertook the duty without the assistance of English troops. There was a distinct understanding, as Lord Hartington stated (April 3), "that there was to be no expedition for the relief of Khartoum or any garrison in the Soudan." It was a task beyond his power. All hope of a peaceful conclusion to his mission speedily vanished. The insurrection spread on all sides; the Mahdi's troops captured one after the other the Egyptian garrisons. On the west Osman Digna representing the Mahdi besieged the fortresses of Tokar and Sinkat, and advanced almost within reach of Suakin. The relief of Tokar was entrusted to Baker Pasha, with the Egyptian Gendarmerie. Not yet formed as soldiers, they were no match for the Arabs. The square unexpectedly attacked on its march was immediately broken; the whole army fled, leaving 2200 on the field (February 5). Sinkat and Tokar at once surrendered. The fear lest the insurrection should reach the coast and spread into Arabia, thus disastrously affecting the Indian high road, forced upon England the necessity of defending Suakin. Thither General Graham was despatched, and there he succeeded in winning the battle of El Teb over Osman Digna, and in checking the Arab advance by subsequent operations. The hand of England had thus been in some degree forced; it had been found impossible to decline all responsibility, impossible to avoid recourse to arms; and now the news that General Gordon was surrounded in

Gordon in
Khartoum.

Khartoum roused in England an overwhelming feeling that British troops must be used in this direction also. As early as March 23, 1884, the Mahdi's troops had begun to fire upon the city, and Gordon, driven to the defensive, had been giving



THE NILE VALLEY.

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proof of his resourceful vigour. But before long Khartoum was so closely invested that no certain news of what happened there could be obtained. A universal cry arose in England for the relief of Gordon. Yet the Government continued to hesitate. Though they were fully determined to send an army of relief, there was a great division of opinion as to the most desirable route to be adopted; months were wasted in discussing the question whether Khartoum should be approached by the Red Sea and Berber, or by the longer but better-known route up the Nile. A vote of credit, nominally for preparations only, was demanded before the close of the session, and seemed to prove that an expedition was in contemplation. But there were still some weeks of fatal delay; it was not till the 1st of

Wolseley's
expedition to
Khartoum.
Sept. 1, 1884.

September that Lord Wolseley, who had been chosen to command the expedition, sailed from England. When once active operations had begun, there was no lack of energy or good management. The difficulties which of necessity occurred in moving an army in small boats up a river broken with cataracts were gradually surmounted, but it was not till December that Korti was reached. Aware of the necessity of haste, Wolseley from thence sent forward General Herbert Stewart, with a detachment of some 2000 men, to cut off a great curve of the river by a direct march across the desert to Metemma. General Stewart, fighting successfully two well-contested battles on the way, at Abu Klea and Gubat, arrived again at the river. He had been mortally wounded in the last engagement, and had given up the command to Sir Charles Wilson. Several of Gordon's ironclad steamers were found at Metemma, ready to receive the relieving troops. Wilson thought it necessary to make a reconnaissance below Metemma before proceeding further. The

Fall of Khartoum, Jan. 26, 1885.

delay may have been necessary, but it was certainly fatal to the success of the expedition. On the 28th of January, Wilson with a small detachment of troops steamed up to Khartoum, only to find the flag of the Mahdi waving over it, the place having been occupied and General Gordon killed just two days before.

Gordon was a man cast in heroic mould. His virtues, his faults, and his eccentricities were alike full of grandeur. His strange and varied career, the mastery he everywhere displayed over the half-civilised races with whom he had chiefly had to deal, the charm of his personality, the hold he acquired on the love and fidelity of his followers, had given him a unique place in the admiration of the nation. The dramatic incidents attending the tragic close of the life of such

a man excited the deepest feeling throughout the country. From all sides the most bitter reproaches were directed against the Ministers, who were held to have deserted him and by their procrastination to have caused his ruin. The fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon were in fact the death-blow of the Ministry. No doubt their misdeeds were grossly exaggerated, yet it is not possible to free them from blame.

The whole of their conduct during the unfortunate year of 1884 was marked by irresolution and weakness. The anomalous position they had insisted in taking up produced a tissue of blunders and misunderstandings. Believing that the evacuation of the Soudan was a financial and political necessity, they yet declined responsibility in the matter, and allowed Hicks Pasha to march to his ruin, and Baker Pasha, unaided, to be annihilated in his efforts to relieve Tokar. They then suddenly made use of their practical authority to insist upon the retirement from Upper Egypt. But, regardless of the immense difficulty of the operation, they sent no assistance to the Egyptian Government, but trusted entirely to the individual efforts of Gordon. Again they blundered from a want of definition of their responsibilities and duties. It was uncertain then, and is hardly certain now, whether Gordon went out as representative of the English or the Egyptian Government. It seems to have been agreed when he started that he was to receive orders from the English Government only. And certainly the Government, through Lord Granville, had, on the 19th of February, publicly declared their responsibility for everything that Gordon did. Yet before he left Cairo he was suffered to accept from the Khedive the title of Governor-General of the Soudan, and appears to have been instructed not only to withdraw the garrisons, but to establish some form of independent government. It is certain that he so understood his duties. But every suggestion that he made, every request that he proffered for the purpose of carrying out what he considered the object of his mission was refused, and apparently regarded as implying an excess of zeal on his part. He was not allowed to use Zobeir, the great slave dealer, to counteract the influence of the Mahdi; he was not allowed to obtain the assistance of Turkish troops or of the Indian troops at Wady Halfa; he was not allowed to confer personally, as he desired, with the Mahdi, or to open the road between Suakin and Berber; and, chief blunder of all, a quarrel as to the route of the relieving army was suffered to waste months of valuable time.

The fall of Khartoum sealed the fate of the Soudan. The troops

Death of
Gordon.

Drifting policy
of Government.

gradually fell back. A vigorous but not very successful attempt was made to reopen the line between Suakin and Berber, with all the most complete apparatus, such as a railway and vast pumps for supplying water to the troops. The expedition met with no disaster, but encountered opposition of unexpected strength, and as the Indian troops employed were required elsewhere, the operation was given up, the railway apparatus sent back to England, the withdrawal from the Soudan concluded, and Wady Halfa made the extreme limit of the Egyptian frontier. The chances of invasion from the Mahdi still remained however so strong, that an army of not less than 14,000 men was left in the country.

In spite of all this terrible blundering—indeed, in some degree on account of it—the condition of Egypt was extraordinarily improved before the dissolution of Parliament and change of Ministry in 1885. The Convention of London (April 1885) may be regarded as the starting-point of the successful renovation of the country. From the first it had been recognised that finance lay at the bottom of the Egyptian question. The law of liquidation of 1880 had certainly been a long step forward; but it had in it one point of weakness, an error which has been common in many financial arrangements. It had insisted, not only on the payment of the interest of the debts, but on the establishment of a sinking fund. Thus, when the resources set apart for the payment of the debt and therefore payable to the Caisse were larger, as they often were, than was necessary to meet the interest of the debt, the surplus was paid into the sinking fund, however much it might be needed for the general administrative expenses of the country. The bondholders benefited, but the administration was starved. Sir Edgar Vincent had shown much ability, tact, and determination in bringing the finances into order and insisting on economy. But though by means of the sinking fund the body of the debt had been diminished by a million, there was still an unpayable deficit on the administrative budget. Immediate improvement in the financial situation had been rendered hopeless by the insurrection, the claims arising from the riots in Alexandria, and the difficulties in the Soudan. It was so plain that the deficit could only be extinguished by some change in the law of liquidation (which could not be modified without the consent of the great Powers), that Lord Granville assembled a conference in London to attempt a solution of the difficulty.

The conference was rendered abortive by the unwillingness of France to allow of any diminution of the interest paid to bondholders.

But it had not been wholly useless. Plans had been suggested which might be used as basis of future negotiations. Meanwhile, as the conference had settled nothing, Lord Northbrook was sent to Egypt as High Commissioner to see whether anything could be done on the spot. He advised the Egyptian Government to take a strong step, and to order the taxes to be paid direct into the Exchequer instead of into the Caisse, an evident violation of the existing regulations. Indeed, acting on behalf of their Governments, the Consuls-General of all the great Powers, with the exception of Italy, protested in no measured terms against the action of the Egyptian Government. The Caisse went further, and obtained a legal judgment against it. But meanwhile the broken negotiations had been resumed. The impossibility that Egypt should under the existing arrangements continue its course of improvement was demonstrated, and, with much expenditure of diplomacy and much timely concession, the English Government at length succeeded in securing a general consensus among the Powers, which was thrown into the form of the Convention of London. By this arrangement Egypt was allowed to raise upon the joint guarantee of all the Powers a loan of £9,000,000, at a low rate of interest; while for the future the surplus of the funds of the Caisse, after paying the interest of the loans, was to be employed first in defraying any deficit in the administrative budget caused by duly authorised expenditure. If there was still a surplus, one half went to the Caisse, the other half the administration was free to spend. The Convention gave the required relief. The loan was raised without the slightest difficulty. It enabled the Egyptian Government to pay the Alexandria compensations and all the outstanding deficits, and left in hand £1,000,000 to be spent on the one most pressing need, the restoration of the system of irrigation.

With limits restricted to territory which it was within its power to defend, with finances which now that the Convention had secured a breathing time were sufficient for its needs, Egypt was henceforward to advance rapidly towards prosperity under the masterly leading of Major Evelyn Baring, subsequently Lord Cromer. The period of vacillation seemed to have reached its conclusion. Some of the magnificent hopes which had been formed in the earlier days of the occupation were laid aside, and a firm hand directed to complete a sufficient if more restricted programme of reform.

The foreign policy of the Government had thus been attended with

Abandonment
of the Soudan.

Improvements
in Egypt.

Conference on
Egyptian
finance, 1885.

Lord Cromer's
successful
work.

a fair measure of success in Europe, and in spite of grievous blunders and disasters had left Egypt in a more hopeful position than that country had ever yet attained. It had produced peace; it had maintained and employed successfully the European concert. Even when breaking with it and acting upon its own initiative, England had been allowed without any overt opposition to follow its own course.

The conduct of the Government with respect to South Africa was of a different character, and produced far less satisfactory results. When in opposition, Mr. Gladstone and his friends had raised their voices loudly against the

Gladstone's
policy in South
Africa.

annexation of the Transvaal, and had spoken with severity of Sir Bartle Frere's policy. Yet upon their accession to office no change was made. Apparently the attempt to confederate the South African States was to be continued, and the Transvaal to be ruled as an integral portion of the Empire. The explanation offered seemed sound. It was pointed out that there was the greatest difference in matters of foreign and colonial government between approval and

Question of
annexation of
Transvaal.

reversal of policy; a new Administration has to make the best of the political legacy it receives from its predecessors; that a reversal of policy should follow every change of Ministry would introduce an uncertainty into the national relations which could scarcely fail to be disastrous. But while thus continuing to declare that the authority of the Crown must be maintained, the Government were reconsidering the situation, and gradually arriving at the conclusion that the annexation, carried out as it was believed at the time with the consent of the majority of the inhabitants, had, in fact, been the result of false information. Although the inhabitants of the towns had welcomed the security which annexation would give them, the Boer farmers, who constituted the real strength of the country, were vehemently opposed to any limitation of their independence. In spite of the repeated assertions of the officials that the new government was accepted and the taxes willingly paid, the strength of the disaffection was brought home in no doubtful manner when, on December 16, 1880, a general insurrection broke out, and the Boers proceeded to re-establish their old form of government.

According to the Ministerial explanations, Mr. Gladstone was convinced that a backward step was necessary; that justice required the acknowledgment of the mistake under which the annexation had been carried out; and that the attempt to uphold it and to suppress the insurrection by arms would probably precipitate a general war of races,

not only in the Transvaal, but throughout the Colony. He believed that a peaceable solution might be arrived at, at once honourable to England and satisfactory to the Boers. To reach this desirable end, the good offices of Mr. Brand, the able and honourable President of the Orange Free State, were accepted. On the 27th of January, Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner, informed him that, "if avowed opposition ceased forthwith, her Majesty's Government would endeavour to frame such a scheme as they believed would satisfy all enlightened friends of the Transvaal." Meanwhile, military operations were not suspended. On the 24th of January, Sir George Colley advanced against the Transvaal with an army of only 1000 men. On the 28th he was repulsed in an attack upon the insurgent position of Laing's Nek. On the 7th of February, while attempting to open communications with Newcastle, he was attacked on the Ingogo river, and withdrew with difficulty. Having received no answer to an offer he had sent to the Boers, he hastily attempted to turn Laing's Nek by occupying Majuba Hill. He was there attacked by the Boers, himself killed, and his detachment annihilated.

Majuba Hill,
Feb. 27, 1881.

Immediately following these disasters, an armistice was made between Sir Evelyn Wood, the new commander, and Joubert, the Boer general. The armistice was prolonged, and in March a conference was held, at which Kruger, Pretorius, and Brand were all present, and terms of peace were arrived at.

The Ministry, when charged by the Opposition with yielding ignominiously to the victorious arms of the Boers, declared that negotiations had been already set on foot before the late disasters. It does not seem clear why, if negotiation was possible and imminent, warlike measures should have been taken. Several English garrisons were indeed besieged, and their relief may have been thought necessary to establish the prestige of England during the negotiations. The ignominious failure of the attempt to relieve them, followed immediately by the armistice and peace, was certainly disastrous. Appearances lent themselves to the belief that the Ministerial views of justice were influenced by the failure, and that England had been placed in a humiliating position.

The terms of agreement were afterwards formulated in a Convention, and ratified by the Transvaal Volksraad, October 25, 1881. Every effort was made to save the dignity of England and to give the negotiations the air of a friendly examination into the sources of discontent conducted by a superior Power. A Royal Commission, consisting of Sir Hercules Robinson, Sir Evelyn Wood, and

Convention of
Oct. 1881.

Sir Henry de Villiers, holding its sittings at Pretoria, was appointed to consider all the circumstances of the case. Nor was it without compensation that freedom was again granted to the Boers. The fruitful source of previous disorder had been the unlimited power of expansion which the Boers had possessed; it was this which had brought them so constantly into collision with the native tribes; and the chief cause of the deeply marked separation between them and the English was the entirely different view taken as to the treatment of the natives. In the Convention, which was the outcome of the Royal Commission, a well-defined boundary was established, leaving in English hands the line of communication between Cape Town and the interior, and at the same time preventing further expansion over the Bechuanas to the west. It was clearly understood that the Bechuanas were under English protection. The fair treatment of the natives was to be secured by the presence in Pretoria of an English Resident, specially charged to guard their interests as well as to supervise the foreign relations of the Republic. With these restrictions, and under the fully expressed suzerainty of the British Crown, the Boers were allowed complete self-government. In this case, as in Ireland, the unfortunate coincidence of armed and violent disaffection deprived of all its grace an act of national justice, and left behind it, in the place of gratitude, the formidable lesson that an English Ministry could be made to yield by sufficient pressure.

The lesson was not lost upon the Boers. Victorious as they believed in arms, they yet found themselves in the grasp of a superior Power, which limited their action in some of their most vital interests. It was soon evident that they were unwilling to submit to the restrictions laid upon them. Agitation for modifications of the Convention speedily showed itself. The discovery of gold, and the consequent influx of European immigrants, began to work changes in the character of the people. A wealthier, and not too scrupulous, element was introduced. To the love of individual freedom and impatience of restraint which characterised the Boer farmer, was added the ambition of the adventurous and speculative townsman and miner. There began to be talk of obtaining again the complete freedom secured by the obsolete Sand River Convention of 1852. Causes of quarrel began to multiply. To clear the way for the railroad from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay which was to afford a commercial opening to the sea, it was necessary to destroy the power of the native tribes occupying the north-east of the Transvaal. After many defeats, the Boers succeeded in overcoming their determined

Unrest of
the Boers,
1882.

opposition; the chiefs were brought to trial as rebels, and one of them suffered the punishment of death. Another measure which could scarcely commend itself to English views followed; the greater portion of the conquered tribes were reduced to semi-slavery as indentured apprentices. The action of the Boers on the western frontier gave an even more direct and dangerous sign of their intention to override the Convention. The territorial limits of the Transvaal on that side had been carefully drawn, and the Bechuana tribes had been acknowledged to be under the protection of England. But the Boers succeeded in forming an alliance with certain of the chiefs, while some 500 of them, who could be regarded as little else than freebooters, obtained settlements beyond the limit fixed by the Convention. The great line of internal communication was thus threatened, and a Boer Protectorate within the English Protectorate established.

At the English Colonial Office was Lord Derby. His whole career had been marked by a somewhat extreme anxiety to avoid the risk of war; and he now so far listened to the representations of the Boers as to appoint a Commissioner to examine into the working of the Convention, and to report on the modifications required. The duty of the High Commissioner was however forestalled, and before he left England the Colonial Office was informed that his visit was useless, for the Volksraad had already determined that the time for remodelling the Convention had arrived, and requested leave to send three Commissioners to England for the purpose of stating the demands of the Transvaal Government. Consent was given, and President Kruger, Secretary Dutort, and Mr. Smit, arriving in the autumn of 1883, were able before the close of the year, after numerous conferences with Lord Derby, to set out on their home journey with the conviction that they had been successful.

Early in 1884 the Colonial Minister embodied his views in a new Convention, and laid them before Parliament. It appeared that, for the sake of securing a peaceful solution of the question of the Bechuana frontier, Lord Derby was ready to make great concessions. The Convention was in almost every point favourable to the wishes of the discontented Boer leaders. The western limit, with some slight alteration in favour of the Transvaal, was indeed firmly insisted upon. But, on the other hand, the position of England as the sovereign or suzerain power seemed almost to disappear. The Resident was withdrawn; a representative of less importance and with only consular powers took his place, while in not one of the amended clauses was the suzerainty of the Crown

Lord Derby's
policy.

The Convention
of Feb. 27,
1884.

asserted. The sole mark of superiority retained was the right of veto on foreign treaties, which still remained in imperial hands. Although Lord Derby treated it as a matter of no importance, it is impossible in the light of subsequent events to avoid the conclusion that the omission of some reassertion of the suzerainty was a grave error. Technically the new Convention consisted of amendments of certain clauses containing the conditions of the grant of self-government under British suzerainty which had been made in 1881; the grant itself remained unchanged. But it is impossible to deny that the omission of all reference to the supremacy of England gave rise to the very natural view that the Convention of 1884 was substituted in its entirety for that which preceded it.

It was not without difficulty that the western frontier of the Transvaal was settled and cleared. The native tribes had employed Europeans in their wars. The Transvaal had been used as a basis of operations, and the land was rapidly falling into European hands; the intruders had established two independent governments known as Goshen and Stellaland. To clear them out it was necessary to send Sir Charles Warren with British troops. Without bloodshed, but at considerable cost, the filibusters were got rid of, and in the autumn of 1885 Bechuanaland was formed into a Crown colony.

Difficulties in
Cape Colony
and Natal.

The problems which the Government was called upon to solve in South Africa were not confined to the relations between Great Britain and the Transvaal; a plentiful crop was to be found even in the settled Colonies. By no means the least of these was the attitude of the Dutch element of the population in Cape Colony, a direct consequence of the late complications in the Transvaal. It could not be expected that the inhabitants of Dutch extraction would watch without sympathy the comparative success of the attempt made by their fellow-countrymen beyond the Vaal to secure greater independence. The division between the races, which had been gradually dying out, was again accentuated; and, chiefly by the exertions of Mr. Hofmeyer, a member of the Cape Government, the Afriander Bond was called into existence for the purpose of securing to the Dutch a preponderating influence in the administration of the Colony. Disloyalty to England was not as yet contemplated, but the movement threatened to introduce a dangerous element of discord. Again, the people of Natal, for the most part of British origin, had begun to feel aggrieved at the distinctions drawn between them and the inhabitants of Cape Colony. They regarded themselves as equally well fitted for the privilege of self-government,

and resented the inferior position which they occupied as a Crown colony. A vehement agitation was set on foot to secure constitutional advantages. The problem was left unsettled at the close of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry. The desire of Natal for self-government had been strengthened by the disregard shown to the Colonial wishes in the treatment of Cetshwayo, who had been left a prisoner in the hands of the English at the close of the Zulu War in 1879. He had been restored to his dominions in spite of the strongly expressed remonstrance of the Colony. The restoration produced tribal disturbances, and gave occasion for interference on the part of the Boers, always eager to extend their power towards the east and to secure an outlet for themselves upon the sea. It became necessary gradually to extend British rule northward from Natal along the whole coast until the borders of Portuguese territory were reached.

It was indeed becoming obvious that events had rendered the old view, held by the Liberals with regard to colonial Colonial responsibilities. affairs, impossible. It is somewhat difficult to trace a consistent line in the colonial policy of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry, but there would appear to have been at the bottom of it a desire to be free from colonial complications, and to leave the Colonies to shift for themselves when once endowed with constitutional institutions. If the idea of thus eluding the responsibilities of empire existed, events were on all sides tending to secure its disappointment. More and more home intervention was being demanded, fresh responsibilities were constantly being assumed. In South Africa, while upon the east in Zululand an increase of territory under the immediate superintendence of imperial authority had been found necessary, Bechuanaland upon the west had been withdrawn from the authority of the Cape and placed under the protection of the Colonial Office. The Colony had also proved unable to suppress an insurrection in Basutoland, caused by an imprudent attempt to disarm the natives, and there, too, it had been found necessary to transfer the country to the Colonial Office. Even in Australia the moderating hand of the central Government had been required to check the ambitious views of the local Government. The people of Queensland had thrown covetous eyes upon the island of New Guinea, regardless both of the well-being of the natives and of the claims of other countries. It was only by imperial intervention, exercised at the risk of a dangerous quarrel with the Colony, that the annexation was prevented. The entrance of other European countries, more especially Germany, upon the field of colonial expansion, and the establishment and definition of the

Congo State, still further intensified the difficulty of leaving the colonies to shift for themselves.

Hand-in-hand with the vast responsibility incurred by attempting to rule from one centre dominions so widespread as those of England, went the certainty of a continually increasing expenditure which might well cause disquiet. It had already begun. Large sums had been granted for the increase of the navy; demands were being raised for the establishment of colonial depôts, and the fortification of coaling stations. The alternative which seemed a natural corollary of the Liberal policy was the separation of the colonies, and their establishment as independent Powers when they so desired it. To many men of imperial instincts, with whom the sentiment of a great united empire was strong, such an alternative was abhorrent; and there arose a widely felt desire for some form of federation by which the colonies might become a more integral part of the empire. The idea was warmly supported both by Mr. Forster and by Lord Rosebery. All efforts to form a definite plan were unavailing, and the scheme was generally regarded as utopian; but a Federation League was formed, and the idea of some closer union, some division both of responsibility and expense, while the unity of the empire was still retained, began to take a place in men's minds, and was destined to play a prominent part in politics.

Ireland, Egypt, and the Colonies had afforded abundant opportunities to the assailants of Government. The conduct of domestic affairs was no less full of thorny questions.

Irish Legislation, with its unfailing supply of heated discussion, and the stormy course of foreign politics, had driven domestic legislation into the background, and it was not until the session of 1884 that Mr. Gladstone's Government was able to bring in their Franchise Bill. Of all the measures which had constituted the programme of the Liberal party at the general election of 1880, and to which the Ministry felt itself pledged, this was by far the most important. It was another step forward along the path of Democracy, a fresh development in that process of extension and equalisation of civil rights which had been begun by the Reform Bill of 1832. Its ostensible object was to place on the same footing the rural and the borough voters. Its effect was to add to the roll of voters a vast number drawn from a class less instructed and perhaps less intelligent than the class to which the franchise had hitherto been extended, and whose political action when enfranchised was a matter of much uncertainty.

The Bill proposed by the Government, as explained by Mr. Gladstone

at the end of February, was very simple. By the Act of 1832, the franchise in boroughs had been given to the occupiers of houses of £10 clear annual value. By the Acts of 1867 and 1869 it had been extended to all occupiers of rated dwelling-houses who actually inhabited them. It was not proposed very largely to interfere with these limits. The £10 franchise was henceforward to apply to *land*, whether there were buildings on it or not; and a new franchise, intended to include those who though in all respects fitted for the enjoyment of the franchise were prevented by their occupations from living in houses of their own, was to be established. The name of "Service franchise" sufficiently indicates its character. To these franchises as established in boroughs, the county franchises, to which previous legislation had fixed higher limits, were to be now exactly assimilated. The Bill was to apply not only to England but to Scotland and Ireland. Its result would be an addition of about two million to the three million electors already existing in the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister allowed at once that so vast a change must require the redistribution of seats, and this immediately. Yet he determined to introduce the two measures separately, to proceed first with the enfranchising Bill and to pass, only after its completion, to the question of redistribution. The wisdom of such an arrangement was of course doubtful; but Mr. Gladstone at once took high ground, and attempted to give his Bill a character of broad constitutional meaning which might raise it above the level of ordinary party contest. He based his advocacy upon no grounds of class or party, but upon the great principle that in width of representation lay the strength of the constitution, and that it was a good thing in itself that as large a body as possible of fitting voters should enjoy the franchise. With regard to their fitness, he held that the countryman, though he might be less sharp than his compatriot in the town, was likely to be a man of greater self-dependence and of more practised judgment because so much in his daily life was left to himself and his hand had to be ready for so many various occupations. Redistribution, which Mr. Gladstone evidently regarded as chiefly important in its relation to parties, he said, might well be postponed. The principle of the Franchise Bill he declared to be quite simple, and to be of such importance that as little opening as possible should be given, by the introduction of side issues, for those minor differences of opinion by which Bills are so often wrecked.

This view befitted a great statesman; yet it was exactly on this point, the separation of the two parts of the measure, that the

The Franchise Bill introduced, Feb. 1884.

Conservatives based their opposition. Thoroughly disliking the Bill, they yet felt it impossible to resist what was but the natural outcome of principles already accepted. They saw however, as Mr. Gladstone had feared that they would, infinite opportunities of throwing obstacles in the way of its completion if they could obscure its simple outlines with the details of party issues. And as far as party tactics were concerned, the destruction of the Bill was of great importance. The Parliament was drawing towards its natural end, and the Opposition believed, or at all events affected to believe, that, if the Franchise Bill alone was allowed to pass, Government would at once dissolve, so that the new Parliament might be elected by the enlarged constituencies unmodified by redistribution. They believed, moreover, that the Government was severely shaken by the disasters of its foreign policy; they were therefore eager to find some means of defeating it speedily and forcing a dissolution, so that the general election might be held with the existing limited constituencies. The anomalies of the franchise were so obvious that they had little hope of resisting the Bill by itself. It is true that some members even of the Liberal party, such for instance as Mr. Goschen, were bold and independent enough to state the strong objection they felt to placing political power in the hands of a constituency so ignorant as they believed the rural population to be. It is true also that a still larger number of men on both sides of the House questioned the propriety of extending the new franchises to Ireland; they feared that the increase of voters would diminish the proportionate strength of the loyal minority, and that its effect would only be that which they before all else deprecated, an increase of the power already wielded by Mr. Parnell. But on neither of these points, nor on the form in which the Bill was presented to the House, would the Government give way. Mr. Gladstone opposed every assault upon its essential principle; and Mr. Trevelyan, the Irish Secretary, who had had much to do with drafting it, did not hesitate to say that its extension to Ireland was so integral a part of it that he would instantly leave any Ministry who thought of applying it only to England and Scotland. The discrepancies visible in the views of the Opposition with respect to redistribution seemed in themselves to justify the course the Government had taken in separating the two measures.

The Franchise Bill was too important to escape a lengthened discussion, but as it gradually worked its way through its various stages, the feeling constantly became stronger that its principle was

Opposition to
the Franchise
Bill.

Persistence
of the Govern-
ment.

unassailable. The sole hope of successful opposition to it lay in the demand for immediate redistribution; and, in the face of the assured Government majority in the House of Commons, it was felt that the destruction of the Bill on this ground must be relegated to the House of Lords. It was soon known that the Peers would have no objection to undertake the task laid upon them by the Opposition. Early in May a meeting of Conservative Peers was held, followed by an article in the *Standard*, the accepted organ of the party, which announced that if the Bill reached the Upper House it would be met by a resolution which would, if carried, be tantamount to a rejection of the Bill itself. A disagreement between the Houses, recalling the great crisis of the Reform Bill of 1832, was imminent. The utterances of Lord Salisbury during the Whitsuntide recess seemed to destroy all hope that the collision could be avoided. "Unless the measure for Redistribution went hand-in-hand," he said, "with the measure for Representation he would strongly recommend the Lords to throw out the present Bill." It was thus with a full recognition of the approach of a dangerous quarrel that Mr. Gladstone in June moved the third reading of the Bill. He spoke in language which was thought by some to be unduly threatening. While looking forward with grave apprehension to a collision between the Houses, he declared his own conscience clear, and threw the responsibility entirely upon his opponents. His words produced some protests in favour of the rights of the Upper House, but without much delay the third reading passed in June *nemine contradicente*, the Conservatives having left the House well assured of the futility of opposition and certain that their objects could be secured elsewhere.

The position of the Conservatives in the Upper House was not without its difficulties. The question at issue was one in which the interests of the Lower House were far more deeply implicated than those of their own. And though there could be no question as to their constitutional right to throw out the Bill, any interference on their part in a question of representation was certainly open to objection. Moreover, it could scarcely be denied that the narrow ground on which they rested their opposition gave their action the appearance of a party move. It was in avowed fear, from a party point of view, of a general election with the enlarged constituency that they had determined to force on a dissolution. The House of Lords could scarcely avoid the imputation of allowing itself to be used as a party instrument by the Conservative

The Franchise
Bill in the
Commons.

The Franchise
Bill in the
Lords.

leaders. Such objections and difficulties however had no effect on Lord Salisbury. In vain did Mr. Gladstone reject with scorn the theory that under any circumstances the Peers could have a right to dictate the moment for dissolution. In vain were moderate voices raised, warning the Peers of the dangers of the line of conduct on which they were entering. The Opposition leader and his friends were firm in their determination; and, as had been foretold, immediately on the introduction of the Bill it was met by an amendment moved by Lord Cairns, declaring that while the House was willing to concur in a complete scheme for the extension of the franchise, it could not consent to support the second reading of the Bill, "unless accompanied by an adequate assurance that the measure would not come into operation except as an entire scheme." Backed by the great Tory majority always at his command in the Upper House, Lord Salisbury upheld the amendment in a speech full of bitter sarcasm. The division showed that the House had freed itself of all scruples. The amendment was carried by a very large majority.

It was at once understood that this vote, although it did not formally reject the Bill, was fatal to its further progress. Mr. Gladstone thereupon stated his intention to get through the necessary work as quickly as possible, and to call an autumn session in which the Bill, unaltered, would be reintroduced. But though assuming this firm position, there is no doubt that he was eagerly desirous to avoid an internecine contest between the Houses. More than once he pointed out the risk of grave constitutional difficulties if the Peers, by their opposition to the will of the constituencies, forced upon the country the question of the reform of the House of Lords. More than once he emphasised the possibility of the junction of the two questions, the reform of the representation and the reform of the House of Lords, becoming a source of serious danger. He had indeed ever since the second reading of the Bill, carried on informal negotiations with the Opposition leaders, with a view of arriving at some compromise and of discovering what they would regard as an "adequate security." These negotiations produced much misunderstanding and much useless vituperation; but they at least proved that on the part of the Liberal leaders there was a real inclination to arrive at some form of compromise. The feeling that a direct quarrel between the Houses should be avoided was so strong with a considerable section of both parties, that Lord Wemys introduced an amendment embodying such a compromise. Finally however on the advice of Lord Salisbury it was rejected, and an amendment of Lord Cadogan

Necessity for
autumn
session.

declaring in set form "that the two Bills should be presented together in the autumn," was carried. The Franchise Bill thus disappeared.

The session was shortly brought to an end, and England rang with loud declamations in support of one side or other of the great dispute. There was a perfect rage for public meetings. The Liberals claimed to have held no less than 1277 in England, and 235 in Scotland. The number of those who attended them was roughly calculated at 4,000,000. It was considered that the will of the people was clearly demonstrated by these overwhelming figures, contrasted as they were with the poor tale of 180 meetings and an audience of 300,000, of which the opponents of the Bill could boast.

Public excitement on the Franchise question.

Parliament again met in October for an autumn session. A few words were said in the Queen's Speech about the condition of Egypt and of the Transvaal; but the only Bill mentioned was the Franchise Bill, which was to be at once reintroduced. It was in fact brought in on the second night of the session. In spite of the flood of argument with which the country had been deluged, the spirit of compromise, so constantly visible in English affairs, had been gradually spreading. In the short discussion which attended the reintroduction of the Bill this was abundantly proved, the Government going so far as to confess that they recognised the propriety of the demand that some knowledge should be afforded to the country of the character and scope of their proposed Redistribution Bill. This was accompanied by a pledge that it should be immediately introduced. The Franchise Bill was carried quickly through all its stages, and read a third time in the House of Commons without division. Its reintroduction in the Upper House was attended by an intimation that certain concessions could be made. What these were was explained by Lord Granville the day before the second reading (November 17). Party spirit aside, there was indeed abundant room for compromise. The Government, honestly intent upon the broad issues of the controversy, desired to make sure of the passing of the Bill for the extension of the Franchise. If that was certain, they were not unwilling to discuss the Redistribution Bill, and to approach it in a spirit fair to both parties. On the other hand, the Opposition, to whom the Bill was no doubt originally distasteful, had found themselves unable to withstand it. They had accepted its principle, but had fallen back upon the partisan view of the question, and simulating extreme mistrust of the Government intentions had confined themselves to the demand for redistribution.

Autumn session, Oct. 1884.

Spirit of compromise.

vice.

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But this was after all little more than a trick of party warfare. The Lords had made a great demonstration of their constitutional powers, but had no wish to submit to the risk of reform. Already they had rejected a motion of Lord Rosebery's in favour of a voluntary reform of their House, and had certainly no mind to enter into a struggle with the Commons which might have forced reform upon them against their will. If the one party therefore was ready to give a pledge that the Franchise Bill should pass, the other was willing to promise and even to give security that a Redistribution Bill should immediately follow it. It was upon these lines that the compromise was effected.

Negotiations were opened between the party leaders, and, as the outcome of various conferences and compromises, a Redistribution Bill was produced. The Bill thus concocted contained two disfranchising schedules, in one of which were included all boroughs with a population of less than 15,000; in the other, towns with a population of less than 50,000 which were henceforward to send to Parliament one member only. There were a few special exceptions; but the effect of the whole was the extinction of 160 seats. The peculiarity of the Bill was the method in which these were redistributed. There had been as usual much discussion, more especially as to the best method of representing minorities; but the more popular view was to discard all complications, and to introduce what was spoken of as the "One member system," which consisted in the breaking up of cities, boroughs, and counties alike, into electoral areas, each area returning a single member. There was much difference of opinion among both parties upon this point. Mr. Gladstone had himself declared when he introduced the Franchise Bill that he was inclined to the maintenance of the existing divisions, by which he believed the representation of a great diversity of interests would be best secured. Such also was naturally the view of many of the older Conservatives. But the more moderate sections of both parties had now to count upon newly arisen influences.

It was not in the Liberal party alone that divisions of opinion were seen. Lord Randolph Churchill, at the head of a small band of followers, recognised as the Fourth party, had declared his independence of the old Tory leaders, and had assumed the somewhat anomalous attitude of a Tory Democrat. To him, as to the Radicals, the "one member system" recommended itself. His influence was sufficient to convert Lord Salisbury to the same view; and the chief point of the settlement arrived at between

the parties consisted in the acceptance of this scheme. A few exceptions to it were allowed, such as the city of London, and some towns of between 50,000 and 165,000 inhabitants. In these cases more than one member would still be permissible. There was also a slight addition made to the number of seats in England and in Scotland. In Ireland and in Wales the number remained unchanged.

On the 5th of December this Bill was read a second time, and passed without division; and, according to agreement, the Lords on the same day took into consideration the Franchise Bill, and passed it without alteration.

A vast constitutional change, comparable in its importance to the great Reform Bill, was thus ultimately effected by general consent, after having threatened for awhile to produce a most formidable dislocation in the quiet working of the constitution. But this peaceful consummation had unfortunately been postponed long enough to allow of that very extension of the point at issue which Mr. Gladstone had regarded as so full of danger. The action of the Peers had forced upon the public mind grave doubts as to the constitutional value of the Upper House. It had become a commonplace with the orators of the Radical party to stigmatise the House of Lords as a mere party instrument in the hands of the Tories. Its unrepresentative character, and the obvious legislative incapacity of many of its members laid it particularly open to attacks of this description. The partial truth contained in the charge, and the recognition of the inherent weakness of the Upper House as an institution in a Democracy, had induced Lord Rosebery to bring in a motion recommending the Lords to carry out a reform of their House from within. He had found but little support, and his motion had completely failed. But his action gave strength to the general feeling, and the reform or abolition of the Upper House became from this time a part of the advanced Liberal creed.

Scarcely had the two Bills connected with the representation of the people been passed, when the series of events occurred which somewhat unexpectedly led to the fall of the Ministry. During the whole of Mr. Gladstone's tenure of office since 1880 the Government had encountered difficulty after difficulty. At the end of 1884 it seemed as if they had weathered the storm. In the teeth of bitter opposition, they had at all events produced a more tolerable state of affairs in Ireland under the able guidance of Lord Spencer, and had carried considerable remedial measures. In Afghanistan they had succeeded in establishing a native

Franchise Bill
passes the
Lords.

Question as to
the value of the
Upper House.

Difficulties of
the Govern-
ment.

Government which promised to be lasting. With perhaps an excess of honesty they had restored the independence of the Transvaal Boers under the lightest of limitations, and secured for the time peace in South Africa. At home they had carried to a successful issue their great attempt at the improvement of the representation. And, although they had found themselves obliged to break the European concert, and although England thus stood much alone in its foreign relations, their action in Egypt was apparently successful. After much vacillation and perhaps unnecessary delay, the army was now in full career towards Khartoum to rescue Gordon and to complete that concentration of the Egyptian power within narrower limits which the advance of the Mahdi had seemed to render necessary.

Yet, at this very moment, any credit which the Government might have claimed was swept away by the terrible news that the work of the army had been entirely wasted, that it had arrived too late, that General Gordon had fallen, and that Khartoum was in the hands of the Mahdi. It has been already said that every step taken by the Ministry in their management of Egyptian affairs had been followed with jealous eyes and pitiless criticism. The strictures of the Opposition seemed now thoroughly justified. The charges of vacillation, procrastination, and inefficiency seemed to need no further proof.

The Ministry was deeply discredited when it met Parliament after the Christmas recess; and that Lord Rosebery should have consented to take office, as Lord Privy Seal (January 1885), in so unpopular a Cabinet was certainly an act of chivalry. The opportunity for attack was too obvious to be neglected by the Opposition. Immediately after the opening of Parliament Sir Stafford Northcote moved a vote of censure. The words of his motion were in themselves weak and ineffective enough.

They contained no direct censure upon the past policy, and were limited to the declaration that the Government must be called upon to take immediate measures in accordance with its responsibilities. But for some time previously the Government had been straining every nerve to carry on an expensive and difficult war, and now in the face of the late disasters seemed heartily in agreement with the popular cry that Khartoum must be retaken and the Mahdi's power destroyed. It certainly appeared ill-timed to call upon them to recognise their responsibilities. But the words served well enough to cover an attack upon what was the great crime of the Administration in the view of the Conservatives, that it had refused to establish a Protectorate in Egypt,

News of the fall of Khartoum, Jan. 1885.

Sir S. Northcote's vote of censure.

and had always avowed its intention of withdrawing as soon as possible from the country, and that even now it seemed likely that, the blow once struck, the Soudan would be evacuated without delay. The words of the vote of censure afforded, too, quite sufficient cover for the angry feeling everywhere prevalent that Gordon had been deserted and that the Government were answerable for his death. It was not easy to make a defence against such charges. It was impossible to deny that indecision had caused the delay which had proved so fatal. There seemed a touch of littleness in stating that Gordon had desired to act singlehanded and to carry out the evacuation of the Soudan without the assistance of English troops. Nor was it possible to deny that, however peaceful their intentions may have been, the action of the Government had, as a matter of fact, plunged the country into an expensive and dangerous war. Nor could they clear themselves by promises for the future. They had to rely upon Sir W. Harcourt's declaration, that to pledge themselves to any line of future conduct which must of necessity depend upon unknown circumstances was impossible, and that one thing only was definitely certain, that under no circumstances would they break their engagement to render secure the government and dominions of the Egyptian Khedive.

The vote of censure moved by Lord Salisbury in the Upper House was, as might be expected, of a much more trenchant character. "This House," he declared, "is of opinion that the deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided counsels of Government and to the culpable delay attending its operations." Then, passing to the future, he went on to assert that, "the policy of abandoning the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations would be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the empire." Here, too, the defence bore an unavoidable appearance of weakness. But Lord Granville was probably not far from the truth when he treated the angry language of the Opposition as a mere ebullition of party feeling, and declared his belief that Lord Salisbury, if in office, would follow the same line of policy as his predecessors. The result of the vote of censure was a foregone conclusion; it was negatived in the Commons by the narrow majority of 14, and in the Lords it was carried by the triumphant majority of more than 120.

It was certain that the Government had sustained a severe blow, and there was much talk of a Ministerial crisis; but it was finally decided to pay no attention to the censure of the Upper House. It was nevertheless generally understood that the dissolution, which could

Salisbury's vote of censure.

not in any case be far distant, would be hurried on, and that only a few of the more important and necessary Bills be proceeded with. But events which took place in Central Asia, known as the Pendjeh incident, interrupted this quiet process of Parliamentary death, and for a moment brought the nation within measurable distance of war.

The occupation of Merv by the Russians had brought them into actual contact with the Afghans. To keep Afghanistan clear of Russian influence was the object of both the English parties, whether as a Protectorate or a friendly independent Power. Arrangements had been made for the delimitation of the frontier, and Sir Peter Lumsden, with a large staff and escort, had been despatched as Commissioner to meet the representatives of Russia on the spot. Difficulties had at once arisen. The Russian Commissioner had not made his appearance. The exact direction of the line to be marked out had not been clearly defined. The Afghans had meanwhile occupied a position which the Russians considered threatening, and in February news reached England that the Russians were advancing, and that the danger of collision was so great that, much to the anger of our Afghan ally, Sir Peter Lumsden had withdrawn into safer quarters. It can scarcely be wrong to connect the advancing attitude of Russia with the fall of Khartoum. The occupation of the British army in Egypt, and the loss of prestige which had accompanied the death of Gordon, afforded an opportunity not likely to be neglected by the energetic commander who was subjugating Central Asia. The hope that the explanations from St. Petersburg might prove satisfactory and avert war faded when news arrived that on the 30th of March the Russians had attacked and defeated the Afghan army, and had occupied the district known as Pendjeh, to the south of what was understood to be the proposed line of frontier.

It was a moment of extreme danger. The warlike temper of the nation was aroused by what seemed to be a wanton breach of faith on the part of Russia. Already in March, to support the previous negotiations, orders had been issued to mobilise two army corps in India. Even the calling out of the Militia and the Reserves had been in contemplation. It was now (April 21) thought necessary to turn aside the troops which were to have been employed in the Soudan, to commission and charter ships to strengthen the navy, and finally to demand a vote of credit for £11,000,000, which could scarcely be wanted except for some important war. The speech in which Mr. Gladstone introduced his

Bad news from
Afghanistan,
March 1885.

Preparations
for war with
Russia.
April 21.

demand for the vote of credit gave clear evidence of his own view of the Russian conduct, and of his determination to resist it. It was received in the House with unbounded enthusiasm. But at heart devoted to peace, and with followers much divided in opinion, his warlike utterances were not followed by corresponding action. Means were found to bring the questions at issue to arbitration, and the incident passed off peacefully. Commissioners without so much warlike apparatus as had attended Sir Peter Lumsden were again sent to the frontier, and with no further friction the work of marking out the frontier line was resumed. The Russians however continued to hold the district they had occupied, and the Government thus again laid themselves open to the constantly repeated charge of their enemies that they had deserted their allies and surrendered territory which they should have held. The debates which arose on this incident had one good result. It became evident that, in spite of party recriminations, there was no real difference of opinion on the policy to be adopted upon the Indian frontier. It was acknowledged on all sides that to strengthen the existing frontier of India was a matter of necessity; that it was desirable to complete the railway to Quetta, and to hold that station with British forces; while with respect to Afghanistan itself all idea of occupation was dropped; it was henceforward an accepted policy of both parties to support a strong and independent Government friendly to Great Britain and open to its unquestioned influence.

But it was not in its external difficulties or in the assaults of its overt enemies that the greatest danger of the Government lay. The divisions within the party were the real source of its weakness. The prospect of a general election with a vastly enlarged constituency, of which the political views were an unknown quantity, but whose support it was necessary to secure, brought these divisions into still stronger prominence. It was again the Irish question which supplied the chief grounds of difference. It had become necessary to reconsider the policy to be adopted in that country. The Crimes Act was running out, the desire for land was unappeased, the cry for Home Rule was hourly becoming stronger. The administration of Lord Spencer had been eminently successful; his opinion was naturally of great weight. While freely recognising the improved condition of the country, he considered that there were certain parts of the Crimes Act which should under all circumstances be continued, as affording a necessary means for the discovery and prevention of

Divisions in
the Liberal
party.

Difference of
opinion as to
Ireland.

crime. The older and more moderate members of the party agreed with him, and the introduction of a Coercion Bill of some sort was resolved upon. The more advanced Liberals looked with extreme dislike upon any form of exceptional legislation, and considered that a large measure to facilitate land purchase, which should enable the tenants by means of capital advanced by England to become freeholders, was the true method of continuing the pacification of the country; but many Liberals, and at their head was Mr. Chamberlain, while desiring to the full the extension of the freeholding class, thought the better method of arriving at that object, and of giving satisfaction to the Irish, lay in political reform, and were in favour of some large measure of local government. It was in this direction also that Mr. Parnell and his friends were inclined to move; it was an open secret that they would give their support to whichever party opposed exceptional legislation. Attempted pacification by means of a Land Purchase Bill was distasteful to them. Their object was exclusively political; it was Home Rule they were seeking. Once possessed of political power, of local self-government of a popular character, they felt sure of being able to mould the Land Laws according to their own wishes.

The variations in the several lists of measures which Mr. Gladstone put forward as those with which he intended to proceed gave evidence of the rise and fall of the influence of the partisans of these three views. In the first list the Coercion Bill occupied a prominent place. But before long an Irish Land Purchase Bill made its appearance among the necessary work of the Session. Instead of healing the party breach, this concession only widened it; for the older members of the party, such as Lord Selborne, had grave objections to any measure of the kind. It seemed however as though a compromise had been arrived at when, after Whitsuntide, Mr. Gladstone, in sketching the course of business, made no mention either of a Local Government Bill or of a Land Bill. It was at all events evident that there were such grave points of difference between the various sections of Liberals that the ability of the Premier would be taxed to the full to keep the party together. A way of escape from these difficulties unexpectedly presented itself.

The expenditure rendered necessary by the Soudan War, the war-like preparations, and the great vote of credit seriously hampered the finances. It fell to Mr. Childers, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to find some means of meeting the deficit, which had reached the sum of £15,000,000. He

The Budget introduced, June.

produced a carefully constructed and well-balanced Budget. He suggested the suspension of the Sinking Fund for the repayment of the National Debt for two years. Half the required sum would thus be supplied. With respect to the other half, regarding it as a fixed principle that the new charges should be divided equally between direct and indirect taxation, he proposed, on the one hand, to raise the income-tax from 5*d.* to 7*d.*, and to equalise the death duties on personal and real property, while, on the other hand, he intended to increase the taxes on beer and spirits. The Budget, although it appears to have been a very reasonable one, encountered opposition on all sides. Both propertied and unpropertied classes considered their interests unduly touched; while the Conservatives saw with dismay a sacrilegious hand laid upon the sacred privileges of real property, the advanced Liberals held that the increase of indirect taxation bore too heavily upon the poorer classes, especially as wine, the drink of the wealthy, was not included in the taxable articles. Lastly, the Irish found a national grievance in the addition to the spirit duty, regarding it as an assault upon one of their chief manufactures.

The result was that the Budget on its second reading was thrown out, and an amendment moved by Sir M. Hicks-Beach condemning both branches of the Budget proposition was carried by a majority of 12. In the division the Parnellites had unanimously sided with the Opposition. But the real cause of the failure of the Government seems to have been the large abstention of the Liberals; no less than 76 were absent, many of whom had not paired. It is not improbable that the disordered ranks of the Ministerialists, in deep perplexity as to their Irish policy, were not sorry to find a less compromising means of retiring from office in a finance question of no very vital importance. Mr. Gladstone, to whom the refusal to grant the necessary taxes after a vote of credit had been given seemed an unconstitutional proceeding, had early declared that the acceptance of the Budget was a matter of life and death to the Government. He refused to reconsider his position, and the Ministry at once resigned (June 12, 1885).

The Budget rejected and the Ministry resign.

CHAPTER II.

LORD SALISBURY'S MINISTRY, June 24, 1885, to Feb. 1, 1886.

<i>Premier and Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Salisbury.
<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Idlesleigh.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Halsbury.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Cranbrook.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Harrowby.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir R. A. Cross.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Colonel Stanley.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Mr. W. H. Smith.
"	Lord Cranbrook (January 1886).
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Lord Randolph Churchill.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Lord George Hamilton.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Stanhope.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Lord John Manners.
<i>Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Mr. Chaplin.*
<i>President of Local Government Board,</i>	Mr. Arthur Balfour.*

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Carnarvon.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Ashbourne.
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>	Sir W. Hart Dyke.*
"	Mr. W. H. Smith (December 1885).

* Not in the Cabinet.

THERE was some delay in the appointment of the new Ministry. It was plain that whoever might be called to office would have to confine himself to bringing the Session to a close, that he would be liable at any moment to be outvoted by the Opposition, which on ordinary topics was largely in the majority, and that the real struggle between the parties must take place at the approaching general election with a new constituency, a new register, and a new distribution of seats. Although Mr. Gladstone would not pledge himself to any distinct course of action, he said enough to induce the Queen, after some days' delay, to express to Lord Salisbury her belief that he might safely trust to the assurances of forbearance on the part of the Opposition which she had received from Mr. Gladstone, and might accept office. The remarkable point in the construction of the new Cabinet was the victory won by Lord Randolph Churchill and the fourth party of Tory Democrats. Sir Stafford Northcote, as First Lord of the Treasury, but without the Premiership, passed to the Upper House as the Earl of Idlesleigh,

Lord Salisbury undertook the duties of the Foreign Office, Lord Randolph Churchill became Secretary of State for India, and the management of the House was placed in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. It was not till July, after the re-elections consequent on the change of Ministry had been completed, that the new Ministers were fully installed in office, and August was not far advanced when the Session was brought to an end.

In the few intervening weeks there had not been much opportunity for the Government to exhibit their policy. In foreign affairs, Lord Salisbury frankly took over the work of his predecessors, and pursued it with marked success on the same lines. No doubt the mere change of Government enabled him to act more vigorously, but it was generally admitted that he used this advantage with great skill, and succeeded in bringing the various harassing ques- Successful foreign policy. tions to a satisfactory conclusion. Negotiating directly with the Russian Ministry, he closed the vexed question in Afghanistan, leaving to the Frontier Commission only the duty of marking out what had been already settled. He found means to remove the objections of the Sultan to our position in Egypt, and, aided by some good fortune in the death of the Mahdi, he found himself able to withdraw from the Soudan and continue the friendly occupation of Egypt.

As regards Ireland it was determined, contrary to the lately expressed views of Lord Spencer, to attempt to keep order by means of the ordinary law; there was to be no new Coercion Bill. As a still further step towards conciliation, Lord Ashbourne, the Lord Chancellor for Ireland, introduced a Bill to facilitate the purchase of land by occupying tenants. It was an enlargement of the land-purchase clauses of Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1881. Instead of three-fourths of the purchase-money, henceforward the whole would be advanced, subject to a retention in the hands of the Commissioners of one-fifth until that fifth had been repaid. In spite of the objections raised to the socialistic character of the Bill, and of the danger which, as was pointed out, lay in the State becoming the virtual The Ashbourne Act, July 1885. landlord, the Bill passed both Houses without much difficulty, and a grant of £5,000,000 was made to the Land Commissioners to carry out its provisions. A measure for the housing of the poor in England, which encountered some opposition on the same grounds, was also carried.

There were still further indications that the Conservatives were inclined to enter into some sort of alliance with their old enemies, the Irish party. The efforts of Mr. Parnell to obtain a revision of the

judgments in the case of the Maamtrasna murders were supported by Lord Randolph Churchill, and received the approbation of Lord Carnarvon. This attempt to destroy the character of the Irish judiciary, and of the late Lord Lieutenant's government, was not made without severe comments from the Conservative side, and not without much blame from the Press of both parties. Whether an actual compact had been arrived at or not, it seemed as though the Irish party was likely to receive substantial consideration for its late action in combining with the Conservatives to destroy Mr. Gladstone's Ministry. It was at least evident that its vote at the coming election could not be without great importance, and would be sedulously sought.

The dissolution in August brought to a close in a somewhat unexpected manner the important Parliament of 1880, and opened the way to what promised to be a party contest of unusual severity.

The Liberal party had been swept into office by the great wave of reaction which had accompanied Mr. Gladstone's Midlothian speeches in 1880. Never had it appeared so powerful, never were its prospects more promising. Yet the five years of Mr. Gladstone's second administration must take their place in the history of English politics as the period during which the disintegration of the Liberal party was consummated. It is true that the actual point of dissolution is to be found a few months later, at the general election of 1886; but all the forces which brought about that dissolution of the great Liberal party were already in active working. Though the Government had failed to fulfil the great hopes which had attended their entrance upon office, the break-up of the party did not depend only or chiefly upon their administrative failure. Beset from the first by unforeseen and serious difficulties connected especially with Ireland and with Egypt, the Government had succeeded, tardily no doubt, and with not a little show of weakness, in placing the foreign affairs of the country in so fairly prosperous an attitude that their successors found little difficulty in bringing the questions which were at issue to a successful termination. The administration of Lord Spencer and Mr. Trevelyan in Ireland, aided by some stringent legislation, had been so far satisfactory that the country, at all events for the moment, seemed tolerably quiet. Domestic legislation had been marked by an achievement of no small significance, by a great step in the democratic reorganisation of the constitution. Though there was much to criticise in all this, there was nothing to discredit, nothing which could foreshadow the eclipse which the party was shortly to

Alliance
between Irish
and Conser-
vatives.

Review of
Gladstone's ad-
ministration.

suffer. Other causes of a more subtle character were at work, some inherent in the very nature of a Liberal party, some the product of several new and important ideas which were forcing their way into notice as political factors.

Every Liberal Government is at a distinct disadvantage as compared with their opponents. Their methods cannot fail to be more difficult and less striking. They are constantly hampered by their own conscientious scruples. To be at once strong and sympathetic is a very difficult matter. To appreciate the feelings and to recognise the rights of the governed, while forcing upon them measures which, however beneficent or necessary, clash with deep-rooted feelings and with rights which, if not real, are at least believed in with profound faith, must always be a matter of extreme difficulty. In the same way, in the foreign relations of the country, to limit the national desire for expansion to what is reasonably within the power of the nation to enjoy with profit, or to what it may honestly demand from its neighbours, without exhibiting weakness or damaging the national self-respect, is a matter requiring far greater courage and patience than to accept and reiterate the bold assertions of a people which regards itself as the natural master of the world, and considers the maintenance of its prestige as its greatest duty. A still greater disadvantage in the political contest is the want of discipline which is implied in the very name of Liberal party. Reform has many sides; resistance to reform has but one. It can only be on certain great lines and at certain great crises that the individuals who constitute a Liberal party can be brought to think and act in unison. There must constantly be greater differences of opinion between various sections of the Liberal party than between that party and its declared opponents.

The last five years were unusually fitted to produce this dislocation of opinion. Quite irrespective of the particular questions which had made the late Parliament so constantly a scene of warm party conflict, certain far-reaching ideas not essentially connected with party, and lying deeper than the surface questions of the day, had made their appearance. The imperial idea so carefully fostered by Lord Beaconsfield, although the reaction from it had been the moving cause of the fall of the Conservative Government, had taken deep root in the minds of men of all parties. Even while repudiating it, and while again and again tracing to its introduction by their predecessors the difficulties they had to encounter, the Liberal Government had been driven, at all events in part, practically to accept it. They had indeed with somewhat overstrained scrupulousness separated

Causes of weak-
ness in the
Liberal party.

Special dis-
advantages in
these five
years.

the Transvaal from the body of the empire, but they had been compelled in more than one portion of South Africa to assert the imperial rights. In Egypt the course of events had been too strong for them; they had found it impossible to confine themselves to a secondary position or to a short temporary occupation, and had been compelled to assume an attitude scarcely to be distinguished from an armed Protectorate. They had found it necessary to overrule the Government of Queensland in its hurried attempt to annex New Guinea, and the central Government had been driven to recognise the danger of colonies not only practically independent, but without common interests with the rest of the empire. The irresistible demand for larger outlay on the fleet and the coaling stations had forced the world-wide distribution of the British dominions into prominence, and although the practical difficulties in the way of any scheme of federated empire gave a somewhat unreal aspect to the movement, the many important names which graced the Federation League proved how deeply rooted the idea was. Those who were affected by it, and those to whom it was odious, were gradually forming parties, subsequently known as the "Great" and the "Little" Englishmen. There is even less difficulty in recognising the growing desire on the part of the Radicals to reform or even to get rid of the House of Lords; while, on the other hand, there is foreshadowed the persistent determination on the part of Lord Salisbury to win back for that branch of the Constitution of which he was a member something of its old position, and to restore something of that influence which had been allowed to dwindle, but which undoubtedly the forms of the Constitution might still secure to the Upper House.

Still more important than these ideas was the wave of Socialism, which in many various forms swept over the country and left strong marks of its work behind. The political conscience, which had been roused as long ago as the old Reform Bill, had now become highly sensitive on social questions. The frightful differences in the distribution of wealth, and the absence among large classes of the community of those advantages which are the very essence of civilisation, such as cleanliness, sanitation, and comfortable homes, had aroused the attention of men of all parties. The theories of Henry George with respect to the nationalisation of land had found many partisans. The separation of the working-class from the soil began to be regarded as a crying evil. The systematic doctrines of the political economist, and the system of *laissez-faire* which seemed to result from them, had received a severe shock. Men began to contemplate

without a qualm legislation which interfered with all the strictest rules of the old *doctrinaire* economists; and Conservatives, to whom property and the sanctity of contract might be supposed to be very dear, did not shrink from advocating measures closely akin to State Socialism. It was indeed the peculiarity of the movement that it affected both parties. It is difficult to avoid the suspicion that the increased power thrown by the late Reform Bill into the hands of the working-classes had something to do with the readiness with which these ideas spread. However that may be, they were largely accepted as a part of the political creed of a considerable section both of one party and of the other. With Mr. Chamberlain social reform was to become before long the chief battle-cry at the general election. It was Lord Randolph Churchill, as the head of the Tory Democrats, who influenced the formation of the new Government and supplanted the older leaders.

It might have been expected that these various elements of discord would have acted with disintegrating force on the one side as well as on the other. Such however was not the case. The Conservative party showed a remarkable aptitude for accommodating itself to prevalent opinion. It has probably always gathered rather round persons than principles. It has constantly exhibited a spirit of partisanship in the truest sense of the word. It thus on the present occasion, without in any way losing its hostility to its Liberal opponents, absorbed much of the popular feeling which would naturally have led to Liberalism, but without breaking up its close party ties. The new Toryism, having won Lord Salisbury to its interests, was able to rid itself of those leaders who represented the older opinions of the party, and to continue its party warfare under younger men of the new school. It was not so with the Liberals. The leaven of the old aristocratic Whigism was too strong to be removed. There lay behind the party a triumphant tradition of success won on orthodox economic lines, with which the bulk of the party declined to break. From this there resulted a somewhat strange state of things; the great body of the Liberal party was to the full as Conservative as the Conservatives themselves. While the Tories clothed themselves in Liberalism, the veteran Liberals found no difficulty in assuming Conservative views. Thus, when a real political point came to be decided, when the mere personal struggle which is so characteristic of the history of the Parliament of 1880 was changed to a fight in which a great principle was at stake, there was no difficulty in the fusion of the whole of one party with a large portion of the other, and the deserted remnant sank into a hopeless minority. The

constantly increasing similarity in the views of the two parties, except on one or two points, of necessity went far to change the character of the criticism to which the Government was exposed. Attention was directed chiefly to efficiency of administration. It was not the object aimed at, but the way in which it was sought, which formed the difference between the parties. But though the sources of the change are found in the Parliament of 1880, it was not without a violent shock that they were brought to a practical completion.

For some time before the close of the session the din of the approaching contest had been loud. The immense increase which the late Acts had given to the constituency rendered the coming election one of unusual importance. The vote of the newly enfranchised labourers might well decide the contest, and in which way it would be cast was a mere matter of speculation. As the Irish would probably vote in pursuit of their own objects regardless of English politics, it seemed possible that they would hold the balance in their hands, unless an overwhelming majority could be secured either by the Liberals or by the Conservatives. To conciliate the Irish or to secure such a majority was absolutely necessary for the success of either party. These two necessities determined the lines on which the election was fought. Social legislation, especially with regard to land, and the various degrees in which concessions might be made to the desires of Ireland, were the prominent points at issue. It appeared as if on the first of these points the Liberal party would at once break up.

The Radicals had found a leader of great ability and indomitable energy in Mr. Chamberlain. In his public utterances and those of the old leaders of the party, such as Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen, there seemed scarcely anything in common. In a speech at Hull the Radical leader laid down as the first point of any Liberal programme that an attempt should be made to destroy the crying evil of the time, the inequality in the distribution of wealth. As steps towards this, he recommended that education should be free, that the income-tax should be raised upon a graduated scale falling more heavily upon the wealthier classes, while with respect to land he declared his willingness to apply to England those more advanced laws the introduction of which in Ireland had met with such violent opposition. He desired that fair rents should be fixed by an impartial tribunal, that every tenant should have the right to sell his goodwill as in every other trade; and, beyond this, that the labourer should be made more independent by a widespread creation

Mr. Chamberlain's views.

of allotments or small holdings, to be procured by the compulsory purchase of land. To carry out this scheme, he upheld the necessity of establishing strong elective local authorities to whom the compulsory power should be intrusted. With respect to Ireland, a process of the same sort, the establishment of representative local authorities, should be pursued.

Nothing could stand out in stronger contrast to this programme than the views of Mr. Forster and Lord Hartington. It was natural that Mr. Forster's observations should be directed towards Ireland, and that he should take the opportunity of declaring his firm belief in the necessity of continued coercion and his strong objection to any relaxation of the Crimes Act, which he said meant the repetition, unpunished, of all those outrages and of that system of boycotting of which he had himself had so bitter an experience. To Lord Hartington, equally naturally, it was the land question which seemed the most important. While desiring a free interchange of land and the destruction of any laws which trammelled it, he admitted frankly that he did not believe "in the efficacy or advisability of any proposition for forcibly or arbitrarily redistributing the land of this country." He clung to the old economic principles accepted by the Liberals. He stood in defence of the rights of property. With respect to Ireland, he declared himself the uncompromising opponent of Mr. Parnell, who had shortly before asserted that the only work of the National party in the new Parliament would be the restoration of legislative independence to Ireland. Such legislative independence Lord Hartington declared impossible.

Views of Mr. Forster and Lord Hartington.

With views so entirely dissimilar as those held by Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Hartington and their respective followers, it seemed doubtful whether the Liberal party would be able to formulate any sort of official programme with which to go to the constituencies. Early in the contest, Lord Rosebery, eager to keep the party together, had made use of an expression which became a by-word. He said that while one claimed to be a Radical, and another a Whig, and he himself was satisfied with the name of Liberal, there was room for them all under the shadow of Mr. Gladstone's umbrella. It remained to be seen how far the manifesto of the ex-Premier, which was somewhat long delayed, would answer the purpose of affording shelter to his various and divergent followers.

Lord Rosebery's views.

It was probably inevitable that a document issued for the express purpose of forming a neutral platform on which men of very different

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views could take their stand should be somewhat vague and unsatisfactory. One question at least was set at rest—the great statesman had no idea of withdrawing from the political arena. He declared himself definitely pledged to continue to lead the party.

Mr. Gladstone's manifesto.

It seems strange that at the very head of the list of the objects which the Liberal party should seek he should have placed reform of Parliamentary procedure. It is impossible to doubt that he was already contemplating the completion in some form or other of his work for Ireland; and, just as he called for a majority so large as to free him from all restraint from the Irish party, so he demanded such a change of procedure as should rescue him from its obstructive methods. Before all, he wanted the stage clear for any legislation he might think it necessary to introduce. He could no longer put up with what he himself described as the congestion of business, the suspension of useful legislation, and the power of the minority to check the will of the majority. Apart from this point he committed himself to very little. He declared himself uncertain on the subject of local government, and looked for the relief of the working-classes chiefly to a change in taxation, by which the balance between real and personal property should be rectified, and the pressure on the rates be diminished by the handing over of certain definite taxes to the administration of the local authorities. On the Land Laws, his opinion appeared to coincide with that of his older colleagues, whom he evidently shrunk from alienating. He said that, though the House of Lords ought to be reformed, the principle of birth should be respected. On the question of the disestablishment of the Church, he was content to say that it had not yet been brought within the sphere of practical politics. As to free education, he reserved his opinion. When he came to Ireland, he carefully avoided laying down any line of action, and confined himself to words which, while they asserted the necessity of maintaining the unity of the empire, left room for a hope on the part of the Irish that he would under certain circumstances go a long way with them. "The limit," he declared, "is clear within which any desires of Ireland constitutionally ascertained may, and beyond which they cannot, receive the assent of Parliament. To maintain the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the empire, and all the authority of Parliament necessary for the conservation of this unity, is the first duty of every representative of the people. Subject to this growing principle, every grant to portions of the country of enlarged powers for the management of their own affairs is not a source of danger, but a means of averting it, and is

in the nature of a new guarantee of increased cohesion, happiness, and strength."

Vague as it was, it seemed as though the manifesto would have the desired effect. Mr. Goschen, whose opinions were still more Conservative than those of Lord Hartington, construed it to mean that Mr. Gladstone accepted the Liberal programme as understood by Lord Hartington. Mr. Chamberlain, boldly maintaining his position, and continuing to demand free education and popular representative local government for the purpose of carrying out social reforms, especially with regard to land, accepted the manifesto as a whole. "It was wide enough," he said, in one of his speeches, "to allow of the attainment of immediate reforms and to prepare for further measures." He however at the same time acknowledged the difficulty of his position, and the possibility that he might be obliged to separate himself from the Cabinet.

The Tory manifesto issued by Lord Salisbury seemed in many ways to accept as the objects of the party much the same things as those desired by the Liberals. The difference lay in the spirit in which they were approached, and in the method in which they were handled. The cheap and easy transfer of real property and the sale of glebes were to satisfy the rising popular demand for land. Though some form of local government might be given to Ireland, the first point was the integrity of the empire. But the real essence of the manifesto, the real bid which it contained for the popular vote of the new constituencies, was to be found in Lord Salisbury's treatment of questions connected with the Church. Emphasising the danger of the destruction of denominational education, and of a desire for disestablishment which had been expressed by many of the Radicals, he raised what was in fact the old cry of "The Church in danger," and made it plain that as far as it depended on him the battle was to be fought principally on this old-fashioned ground. Meanwhile Mr. Parnell, in his turn, expressed a limited acceptance of the Liberal programme, but demanded that Mr. Gladstone should state more definitely what he would give to Ireland; in other words, he indirectly declared himself open to a bid.

The Tory manifesto.

Parnell's demands.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Gladstone went in November to Midlothian, with the intention of delivering three great speeches. Their success was very different from his former addresses in the same neighbourhood in 1880. He accepted the battle-ground chosen by his adversaries, and devoted

Gladstone's Midlothian speeches, Nov. 1885.

his attention chiefly to the discussion of Church disestablishment, the topic which Lord Salisbury's manifesto had brought to the front. From a party point of view, his treatment of the subject was not happy. He separated the cases of England and Scotland, and recognised that the condition of their own Church was a question chiefly for the Scottish people. He did not therefore treat the disestablishment of the Scotch Church as beyond the sphere of practical politics, but he refused to put himself at the head of the movement. This half-hearted and grudging declaration chilled the warmth of many of his warmest adherents, who were largely drawn from the ranks of the Free Church. But the result of his reply to Mr. Parnell was of a much more damaging character. He treated with scorn the unauthorised demand that he should declare a definite policy. "That must," he said, "at least wait till Ireland had spoken by the voice of its representatives." Upon this, Mr. Parnell, finding what he had regarded as friendly overtures thus rebuffed, turned savagely upon

the Liberal party, and issued a sort of proclamation, ordering his followers to vote against the Liberals, "who had coerced Ireland, and deluged Egypt with blood," and who now, shelving for the time all real Liberal policy, were demanding nothing but a majority for the sole purpose of freeing themselves from the Irish party, and new rules of procedure for the purpose of suppressing it in the House.

The elections shortly followed (December 1885), with results scarcely expected, and fraught with momentous consequences. Mr. Parnell had not overrated the strength of his position. Eighty-five Parnellites, pledged to follow him, and not one single Liberal, were returned from Ireland. It was plain that nothing but an overwhelming majority either of Liberals or of Conservatives could prevent this band of enthusiasts, with one object in view, from holding the balance in

Result of the elections.

Parliament. But the elections in England did not produce any such majority. In the boroughs it would seem that the shortcomings of the Liberal foreign policy, and a dread of what were then regarded as the excesses of the extreme Liberal leaders, coupled with the action of the Irish, produced an unexpected victory for the Conservatives. On the other hand, the newly enfranchised county constituencies showed their gratitude by returning a large majority for the Liberals. When the elections were completed, it was seen that, so far from producing the desired commanding majority, the Liberals on the one side, and the Conservatives with the Parnellites on the other, were exactly equal in number.

All hope of returning to power with a free hand was lost; and Mr. Gladstone, with his considerable majority in England, Scotland, and Wales, had to ask himself by what means it might be possible to relax a position which threatened to be a deadlock. At all events, he could no longer feel that he was not sufficiently informed as to the desire of Ireland; the country had given, by the proper constitutional method, a very distinct answer. It was obvious that Ireland, and Ireland alone, must occupy the attention of the House, and that the great questions of domestic policy on which the elections had been largely fought must be laid aside.

Irish affairs at once became the chief topic of all public speeches. Both parties appeared to contemplate the necessity of satisfying in some way or other, and in some degree, the demands of Mr. Parnell and his followers. Very various plans were put forward, and very various limitations on the power of any new Irish authority suggested. There appeared to be no very clear or systematic view on either one side or the other. But these various opinions were at length brought to something like a focus by the unauthorised publication of what purported to be Mr. Gladstone's view upon the subject. Although its want of authorisation was declared, and although indeed it was scarcely consistent with Mr. Gladstone's position to frame any definite plan while out of office, the unauthorised programme bears so close a resemblance to the scheme he subsequently produced, that there can be little doubt that it expressed the opinion at that time occupying his mind; and as such it was generally received. It was little short of a complete Home Rule scheme. Subject always to the necessity of the maintenance of the unity of the empire, the authority of the Crown, and the supremacy of Parliament, a new Irish Parliament was to be created to which the entire management of legislative and administrative business for Ireland was to be intrusted. The imperial charges were to be equitably divided, and security given for the efficient representation of minorities.

The premature publication of this scheme was the occasion of the great breach of the Liberal party. As it appeared to contemplate the establishment of an independent Irish Parliament, at the same time that it in words secured the supremacy of the imperial Parliament, it at once raised the question whether the two were compatible; and all those who were eager in pressing on the public their various shades of concession, but with whom the support of imperial supremacy was a first condition, began to draw together in

Ireland has the balance.

The unauthorised Home Rule scheme.

Breach in the Liberal party.

their hostility to the suggested plan. Those who, like Mr. Childers, desired a relation to be established such as that existing between the States and the Central Government in America, or those who, like Mr. Trevelyan, considered that the maintenance of imperial authority over the police was a matter of absolute necessity, or those who, like Mr. Chamberlain, believed that social changes placed in the hands of elected local councils was the truest form of conciliation, found this point at least in common, that their plans afforded far stronger securities for union than could be found in any form of independent Parliament. The unauthorised programme however had at least this effect, that it seemed to offer much more to the Irish party than they could hope for from their late allies, the Tories. It was understood that any alliance (if there had been an alliance) was dissolved, and that consequently Lord Salisbury would find himself confronted by a hostile majority of overwhelming strength. He determined however at all events to meet Parliament before resigning.

When the Houses met, on January 21, 1886, for the despatch of business, the most important topic in the Queen's Speech, Jan. 21, 1886. Speech was naturally the condition of Ireland. The Queen was made to complain of the renewal of the attempt to excite the people of Ireland to hostility against legislative union. "I am resolutely opposed," she was made to say, "to any disturbance of that fundamental law." It was further indicated that boycotting and concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations would have to be met by some special legislation. The policy of Government was thus plainly declared. The attempt to rule by ordinary law was pronounced a failure, and the time-honoured methods of coercion were to be employed; there was no indication of how far or in what respects the almost unanimous demand of the Irish representatives was to be met. As leader of the Opposition, Mr. Gladstone rose after the Address had been moved, repeated the passage in his manifesto which expressed within certain limits his belief in the advantage and possibility of some form of Home Rule, and declared that he awaited the exposition of the policy of the Government, hoping that the question might be raised above the fight of parties, and promising his support to any offer he considered adequate. He entirely refused to explain his own views, on the fair constitutional ground that the responsibility for any scheme must rest with those in power.

But it was not upon the grave question which occupied all minds that the Ministry was to be driven from office. The Queen's Speech had shown that the coalition between the Tories and the Parnellites

was dissolved; Mr. Gladstone's utterances made it plain that much more could be expected from him than from the Government; the Opposition was for the present sure of the Irish vote. An amendment on a side question, moved by Mr. Jesse Collins, and expressing the wishes of the Chamberlain section of the Radicals with respect to the redistribution of land, afforded the first opportunity of placing the Government in a minority.

The re-establishment of the labourer on the soil, by means of allotments and small holdings provided by the compulsory purchase of land by the local authorities, had formed one point in what was known during the elections as the unauthorised Radical programme; and it had been accentuated by certain resolutions of the Small Holdings Association, lately passed in London. Although Mr. Collins' motion, as an amendment on the Address, could assume no form but that of an abstract resolution, regretting that no definite measures for the relief of the labourer were mentioned in the Queen's Speech, it was regarded as an expression of the Radical views. As a matter of party management, the opportunity it offered of putting the Government in a minority upon a popular measure, rather than upon the vexed question of coercion in Ireland, was too good to be refused. Mr. Gladstone at once took Mr. Collins' suggestion, and raised it to the dignity of a definite part of the Liberal policy. Although the idea of a compulsory sale of land brought out in some degree the cleavage already existing in the Liberal party, and although Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen strongly opposed it, the vigorous support of Mr. Chamberlain and his Radical followers, and the solid vote of the Irish members, ensured its success. The Government was defeated by a majority of 79. Of this majority, 74 were Irish, and Lord Salisbury might, perhaps, have disregarded the vote had not the break-up of the Liberal party appeared imminent, promising to bring with it a speedy return of the Conservatives to office. Mr. Gladstone had indeed refused to give any indication of his Irish policy; but his well-known opinions, and the support he had received from the Irish members, encouraged the belief that he would propose methods of conciliation too far-reaching to be generally adopted by his party. Under these circumstances the Government at once accepted their defeat, and resigned office.

Jesse Collins' amendment.

Resignation of Lord Salisbury, Feb. 1, 1886.

CHAPTER III.

MR. GLADSTONE'S MINISTRY, Feb. 1, 1886, to July 20.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury</i> ,	Mr. Gladstone.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer</i> ,	Sir William Harcourt.
<i>Lord Chancellor</i> ,	Lord Herschell.
<i>President of the Council</i> ,	Lord Spencer.
<i>Home Secretary</i> ,	Mr. Childers.
<i>Colonial Secretary</i> ,	Lord Granville.
<i>Foreign Secretary</i> ,	Lord Rosebery.
<i>War Secretary</i> ,	Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
<i>Indian Secretary</i> ,	Lord Kimberley.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty</i> ,	Lord Ripon.
<i>President of the Board of Trade</i> , . . .	Mr. Mundella.
<i>Postmaster-General</i> ,	Lord Wolverton.*
<i>Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster</i> , . .	Mr. Heneage.*
<i>President of Local Government Board</i> , .	Mr. Chamberlain.
" " " " " " " " " " " " " " " "	Mr. Stansfield (March 26).

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant</i> ,	Lord Aberdeen.*
<i>Chief Secretary</i> ,	Mr. John Morley.

SCOTLAND.

<i>Chief Secretary</i> ,	Sir George Trevelyan.
" " " " " " " " " " " " " " " "	Lord Dalhousie (March 26) *

* Not in the Cabinet.

THE accession of Mr. Gladstone to the Ministry secured sooner or later the authorised publication of his Home Rule scheme. Meanwhile the immediate appointment of Mr. John Morley to the office of Secretary for Ireland gave a clear indication of what that scheme would be; for, amid the clash of rival schemes, Mr. Morley was the one man who had clearly spoken in favour of an Irish Parliament. He had indeed declared that the separation of the kingdom would be a national disgrace, but had sketched a scheme for a legislative body so distinctly and exclusively national that the Irish representatives would be excluded from the imperial Parliament.

So clear an indication of policy raised great difficulties in the way of the formation of a Ministry, and went far to complete the threatened break-up of the Liberal party. At once that section which agreed with Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen declined office. For the instant the effort to

retain the services of Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan was successful; an assurance that the work was to be one of examination and inquiry was found sufficient to induce them to join the Ministry, but it was plain that their adhesion was of the slightest. It was indeed a misfortune that Mr. Gladstone had not taken more entirely into his confidence those who had hitherto worked with him. Though the general character of the new policy on which he intended to embark had been explained to them, he had sought but little assistance in drawing up the elaborate and detailed plan laid before Parliament.

It is natural to suppose that to Mr. Gladstone the opportunity seemed at length to have arrived for putting the finishing stroke to his great structure of Irish policy. Nor Why Gladstone acted alone. was he influenced alone by his sympathy for the misgoverned country, or by his hearty dislike of the coercion which had been forced upon him. He spoke of himself in one of his speeches under the title of "an old Parliamentary hand." The words were of course used against him, and twisted to mean that he was by long practice a consummate party politician and nothing more. But they were words full of deep significance. A life of unusual length devoted to public service in Parliament had had a great effect upon his mind. He was saturated with the more dignified traditions of his earlier days, and eagerly desirous to see the House of Commons resume the active and beneficent position which he rightly or wrongly attributed to it. He could not forgive the Irish party for its coarse obstructive policy, by which, as he conceived, they had not only prevented much useful legislation, but permanently degraded the character of the House. His desire, and he had expressed it, was for such a great predominance of one of the English parties as should enable the House to handle the vexed question of Ireland unhampered. In this he had been bitterly disappointed; and, failing it, he appears to have thought to place the question above party politics. He certainly made more or less definite overtures to his political opponents, and the words which he had used in replying to the Address showed that he still maintained some hope that the spirit of compromise which had saved other critical situations might again be shown. To him the voice of the Irish nation had spoken in the late elections, and he awaited some plan from the Government which while satisfying the aspirations of the Irish might justify the support of himself and his party. The threatened renewal of coercion proved the vanity of this hope. His accession to office transferred to him the duty of satisfying the Irish demands, and, warned by the protests from both the extreme sections of his followers, called forth on one

Gladstone's
difficulties in
forming a
Ministry.

ground or another by the mere shapeless indication of his plan in the unauthorised scheme, he may well have felt that it was upon himself alone that he could rely. Trusting to his own commanding influence and unrivalled abilities, he determined to produce a scheme which should stand upon its own merits; and in formulating it he sought the assistance only of those whom he knew to be like minded. But, however grand this self-reliance may have been, it was not calculated to conciliate a divided party, or to enable him to form a Ministry from the full strength of the Liberals.

Although the new Ministry was not otherwise than a strong one, and though it gained something by the appointment of Lord Rosebery to the Foreign Office, it was more remarkable for the absence than for the presence of prominent statesmen. Lord Hartington, Mr. Goschen, Lord Selborne, Lord Derby, Lord Northbrook, and Mr. Forster, were all alike absent from it. And it was almost certain that, as soon as the attitude of inquiry began to pass into action, the names of Mr. Trevelyan and Mr. Chamberlain would be added to the list of absentees. And in fact on the very day after the introduction of the Irish Government Bill Mr. Chamberlain explained the reasons which compelled him to leave the Cabinet. The name of another old supporter of the Liberal party was missing from the list. Mr. Bright no longer stood side by side with his old comrade and leader. Gifted by nature with all the requisites of the orator, a fine and sympathetic voice and the command of a language singularly simple in its masculine vigour, he had long occupied the position of the popular tribune. His eloquence and sturdy Radicalism had been a chief factor in the success of many a hard-fought Liberal victory. But his Radicalism was of the old-fashioned type; the freedom of the individual was its ideal. The free man working out his own success by means of his own unfettered industry and ability was the type of citizen he desired to produce. Of Quaker origin, and thus naturally drawn towards a peaceful solution of all difficulties, war was to him the greatest of evils. Neither the new doctrines of State interference nor the phantom glories of imperialism had any attraction for him. Great Britain, strong in her own freedom, freedom economical and political, sending out into the world colonies to teach and to enjoy the same free principles, was the national greatness to which he aspired. The inheritance of the policy of their predecessors, the undoubted growth among both parties of the desire for further expansions, had led the Liberal Ministry to pursue a line of conduct of which it was impossible that Mr. Bright could

Desertion of
the old
Liberals.

approve. It was impossible that a man, who in his earlier life had gone so far as publicly to advocate retirement from India, should for the avowed object of securing an easy access to our Eastern empire countenance warlike measures directed against what bore all the appearance of a national movement. The order for the bombardment of Alexandria was fatal to any further connection between him and the Government. He had at once resigned. Nor was Mr. Gladstone's subsequent policy more to his taste. Much as he had sympathised with the demands of Ireland, much as he had contributed to the establishment of peasant proprietorship there, the Land Bill of 1886 appeared to him so destructive of the common laws of justice and of free contract, that it encountered his strongest opposition. "Little Englander," as he would no doubt be called at the present time, he yet felt strongly the absolute necessity of the union of the three kingdoms, and regarded with extreme distrust and dislike any attempt to establish a second Parliament within their limits. When the idea of Home Rule assumed a practical shape, he became one of its strongest opponents. The separation from Mr. Gladstone was no doubt a cause of pain; he could not, he said, "bear to attack his old friend and leader." It was a cause of kindly regret; "If," he wrote in answer to a remonstrance from Mr. Gladstone on the severity of his language, "If I have said a word which seems harsh or unfriendly, I will ask you to forgive it." But neither pain nor friendship availed. The political breach was too wide to be bridged. It was as a firm, nay active upholder of the Unionist policy that Mr. Bright passed the short remainder of his life which closed in 1889.

It was not for some time, during which several pieces of not unimportant legislation were completed, that the question which was occupying the minds of all men was brought forward for solution. On the 8th of April Mr. Gladstone asked leave to bring in his Irish Government Bill, and proceeded to unfold his intentions. The Bill was to be immediately followed by a Land Bill, and Mr. Gladstone was careful to explain that the two formed in fact one indissoluble scheme separated only for convenience.

The Irish Government Bill, as explained by Mr. Gladstone, was, in accordance with his well-known dislike to abstract resolutions, an elaborate and detailed piece of work. Apart from details which as the scheme never came into existence are of little importance, its chief provisions were these: An Irish Parliament sitting in Dublin was to legislate for Ireland and to control the executive. Irish Peers and

Home Rule
Bill brought in,
April 8, 1886.

representatives were no longer to have seats in the imperial Legislature. Questions concerning the Crown, the army and navy, and foreign and colonial relations, were withdrawn from its purview. The constabulary was, after a period of two years, to pass under its control. With the exception of so much of the customs and excise as was necessary to meet its liabilities to England, the taxation was also placed in its hands. Its share of the imperial burdens was settled at one-fourteenth instead of two-seventeenths as had been arranged at the Union. Securities were given for the safety of the Protestant minority; and the religious difficulty was met by an enactment forbidding the establishment or endowment of any religious denomination. The political side of the proposed arrangement was contained in this Bill. But there was no hesitation in acknowledging that the social questions to be solved were at least as difficult as the political.

It was in order to meet these social difficulties that the twin measure, the Land Bill, was to be immediately introduced. It was a gigantic system of purchase. Mr. Gladstone held that his legislation hitherto had been all in favour of the tenant and peasant, and that in the new departure now made it was the proprietor's turn to be considered. Machinery was to be established by which landowners could sell their property to a certain State authority at twenty years' purchase, to be retailed subsequently to small purchasers. The first cost to the English ratepayer was calculated to be not less than £120,000,000, which was to be raised by the issue of new stock.

Bills of such vast proportions, and implying so far-reaching and fundamental a change, could not be thus thrown down in the midst of a Parliament not yet educated to receive them without exciting extreme astonishment and strong and bitter opposition. Not only the Bills themselves, but the conduct of the Minister who had with such reticence formulated them, became at once the object of violent attacks. It is scarcely worth while to mention the suggestions of ambition and self-seeking which were freely imputed; Mr. Gladstone's character and aspirations were too high to allow such suggestions to be seriously considered for a moment. Silence also is the best way of treating such language as men of ill-disciplined minds and flippant tongues, like Lord Randolph Churchill, allowed themselves to use. It cannot injure the fame of a great Minister, attempting though it may be without success to grapple with a question of a difficulty almost insoluble, to stigmatise his plan as the offspring of "verbosity and senility," or as "the foolish work"

Bitter opposition to both Bills.

of "an old man in a hurry." Nor are the charges otherwise than futile which were brought against the completeness of the suggested change of policy, or against the political morality of a man who, having never hitherto shrink from the employment of coercion when he considered it necessary, now appeared as the champion of the party he had hitherto repressed. Mr. Gladstone had been compelled to work as best he could the constitution as it then existed. He had witnessed the failure of his own efforts, and the efforts of his rivals, to preserve law and order without such coercive measures as no wise man could contemplate with equanimity. He had seen the failure of those coercive measures themselves, and had come to the conclusion that it was not the administration but the constitution itself which required alteration.

But quite apart from these useless or ungrounded charges, there was very much in the Bill open to most reasonable objection. The maintenance of the unity of the empire, and of the supremacy of the imperial Parliament, was a principle firmly fixed in the minds of Englishmen. There was no party that did not hold it, there was no responsible statesman but had thought it necessary in the last few months to declare his adhesion to it. One question which immediately arose was whether the arrangements of the Bill were compatible with that principle. Unfortunately, led away probably by his desire for the removal of all obstruction to English legislation, Mr. Gladstone intended to remove the Irish members entirely from Westminster. Such a step seemed to lead immediately to separation. Some form of supremacy might be reserved to the imperial Parliament, but a whole important province of the empire would be excluded from all share in imperial affairs. There was eugeney in Lord Hartington's argument that the process applied to other parts of the empire would leave the English members alone as the representatives of imperial rule. But far more than any logical dilemma involved in the Bill, it was the character of the Irish and the Irish party which chiefly stood in the way of its acceptance. It was not given to the majority of men to feel the same faith in the good results of justice as was felt by Mr. Gladstone. It seemed an extraordinary thing to dream of handing over the government of a country, and with it the fate of a loyal minority who were opposed in every point to the popular feeling, to men who had shown themselves so violent and disloyal and so ready to set contracts at defiance; yet by the enactments of the Bill it was contemplated that the judicial power, the finances (with one exception), and, after a brief interval, all the police, were to be intrusted to the party of disorder. Were the

Serious objections to Home Rule.

securities worth anything more than the paper on which they were written? Would not the payment to the English Exchequer be regarded before long as a hostile tribute to be refused? Would the powerful priesthood of the Roman Church be contented to maintain a position of tolerant neutrality? Among the Conservatives there was no doubt as to how these questions should be answered. The exclusion of the chief sectional heads of the Liberal party from any share in formulating the new policy, and the consequent unpromising character of the Bill, produced from the Liberal ranks an

Opposition of
Tories and half
the Liberals.

answer scarcely less certain. While one section sided unreservedly with the Tories in opposition to the political arrangement, another found in the clauses of the Land Bill a further ground of opposition. Although Mr. Chamberlain had contemplated a great compulsory sale of land going hand-in-hand with a general extension of the authority of local bodies, he saw in the enormous burden which would be laid on the English taxpayer if the Bill was accepted a sufficient cause for opposition, even had he not shared, as he did, in the general objection to what he considered as the dismemberment of the empire.

Upon lines such as those here indicated the great battle was fought. The time that intervened between the first and second reading, which was co-incidental with the Easter recess, was employed by all parties in persistent efforts to strengthen their position. The adhesion

Lord Spencer
supports the
Government.

of Lord Spencer to the Government could not but be regarded as one of the strongest arguments in favour of the Bill. A man of high character, who had carried out his duties in Ireland with marked efficiency, the respect he inspired won still further support from his experience. His speech at Newcastle (January 22), whither he went in company with Mr. John Morley, placed in its best light the conception of the Government proposals formed by honest and liberal minds. After explaining how impossible it was to follow the old methods of government, and declaring the necessity of the close connection between the two Bills, he went on to state his trust in those to whom it was proposed to hand over the government. He could say without hesitation that he had never heard or seen any evidence of complicity in crime established against any of the Irish representatives; he believed them to have an affection for and real interest in the welfare of their country. But he considered that it would be most unfair to leave to a new Irish Assembly the difficulties of the land question unsettled, or to leave the landlords of Ireland unprotected and unheeded for. He concluded his speech in

these words: "If I thought that Mr. Gladstone's policy would lead to dismemberment of the empire, if I thought it would lead to separation, or involve the repudiation of debts, or stir up enmity between the various classes in Ireland, or rouse religious intolerance in the country, I for one should not have raised my voice in support of it. I have no such fear. I have confidence that the Irish constituencies will return members to Parliament who will be faithful to their trust, and that among them the mercantile, learned, and intellectual classes of the community will be represented, and that these men will be ready to do their best to solve the problems before them."

But it was probably neither on the utterances of Mr. Gladstone's followers, nor on those of the Tory party, whose opinions and views were clearly known, that the public interest was centred, but upon the utterances of the leaders of the various sections into which the Liberal party was now broken. Whether the Bills should pass or not depended plainly upon the amount of success attending the efforts to reunite the party. That the Whigs could be induced to return to their allegiance seemed hopeless. At a great meeting in Her Majesty's Theatre (April 14) they had appeared side by side with the Conservative opposition, and had taken the lead in declaring their fixed objections to Mr. Gladstone's policy; and the action of Lord Hartington's constituents, who demanded an explanation of his presence there, had given him an opportunity of emphasising all he had said against the Bills. An organised campaign in Scotland, in which Mr. Goschen and Lord Hartington were the principal speakers, made the firmness of their attitude still more obvious. Mr. Chamberlain's action was not regarded as so certain; but it soon became plain that his support could only be won by an amount of amendment to the Bill which the Government could not be expected to allow. Against the Land Bill he declared himself absolutely (May 8); nothing would induce him to consent to a vast expenditure of English money with the object of purchasing acquiescence to the Home Rule Bill which he regarded as faulty. This essential fault lay, in his opinion, in the removal of the Irish members from the imperial Parliament. Apparently if that point could have been dropped along with the Land Bill he might have found it possible to support the second reading.

Views of
Hartington,
Goschen, and
Chamberlain.

In his overwhelming eagerness to pass the Bill on which he believed the prosperity of Ireland rested, Mr. Gladstone began to give way. He was ready, only too ready for his own reputation, to make concessions. Things which had been spoken of as vital were minimised. Plans all more or less inconvenient and

Gladstone's
concessions.

cumbersome were produced to rectify the great error of the scheme, the exclusion of the Irish members. The Land Bill, which had been introduced as an integral part of the whole scheme, and as the necessary supplement to the Home Rule Bill, was now declared to be separable from it; to vote for the one did not imply approbation of the other. Thus, when on the 10th of May the Bill came on for the second reading, there seemed to be truth in the charge that Mr. Gladstone was introducing after all a thing which he had frequently reprobated, a mere abstract resolution. This view was strengthened when he said in his opening speech that he would take long steps to meet the wishes of his followers, but on certain conditions, one of which was that there was not to be a committee-debate (a debate on the minute details of the Bill) before the second reading. Such a course laid him open to much misrepresentation. Charges of inconsistency and of yielding merely for the sake of keeping office were freely levelled at him. He had, as a matter of fact, found it necessary to contemplate modifications so grave as to necessitate a complete remodelling of the Bill. When, on a motion for adjournment of the House, information was extracted from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the intention of the Government was to prorogue the House and bring in a new remodelled Bill in the next session, the fate of the measure was sealed. There was no difficulty in urging the absurdity of demanding a vote upon the second reading of a Bill which was confessedly dead. The debate indeed continued for several nights, but it was scarcely to be expected that a majority would pledge themselves to a principle and, as it was understood, to the acceptance of a future and unknown Bill. When at length the question was put, and the strange sight of a Whig and a Radical acting as tellers for the Opposition to a Liberal Government was seen, it was found that 93 Liberals had withdrawn from their party, and that the Government was in a minority of 30 in a house of 656. Mr. Gladstone accepted his defeat, and, believing that he would still be able to maintain a majority in the constituencies, determined at once to place the decision in their hands.

On the 26th of June this short Parliament was dissolved, and the excitement of a general election began. As was inevitable, the addresses of the leaders laid stress some on one scheme some on another. Thus Mr. Chamberlain clung to his view in favour of a general Local Government Bill, in which Scotland, Wales, and Ireland might all be similarly treated. Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen seemed chiefly interested in the

Defeat of the
Home Rule
Bill.

General elec-
tion, July 17,
1886.

injustice and, indeed, impossibility of handing the Ulster loyalists over to such men as would almost certainly become the national representatives under a Home Rule scheme. On the other side, while Lord Spencer continued to urge that the Home Rule and the Land Purchase Bills went hand in hand, and that the Irish were worthy to be trusted, Mr. Morley defended the removal of the Irish members from the imperial Parliament. But, whatever the form taken by the addresses, the line of cleavage was really that stated by Mr. Gladstone himself. He owned that the Bill in its old shape was dead, and declared that the critical question was the broad principle whether under some form or other the Irish should or should not govern their own affairs. It was scarcely wise from a party point of view, or even for the purpose of obtaining the object he so ardently desired, to rest the issue on so ill-defined a ground. To say that his Bill was dead seemed in fact to acknowledge that in framing it he had mistaken the wishes of his own party and of the English constituencies. It might not unreasonably be asked, what securities were offered that if he was again intrusted with power he would not fall into some similar error; while at the same time his supporters would be pledged to vote for a Bill of which they might not approve, but which purported to be the practical outcome of the principle for which they had voted. The result of the elections proved at all events conclusively that the constituencies were not ready, to use the language of the time, "to send representatives to Parliament with a mandate to secure Irish self-government." A notable increase in the Conservative ranks, and the election of no less than 78 Liberals who for the time threw in their lot with the Conservatives, placed Gladstonians and Parnellites combined in a minority of 113. Lord Salisbury could say with truth that the one mandate given was to preserve untouched the legislative union of the two countries. So clear was the voice of the elections that Mr. Gladstone at once resigned, and Lord Salisbury again undertook the Administration (July 20, 1886).

The break-up of the Liberal party was consummated, and the power of what has been spoken of as "the greatest instrument of progress the world has ever seen" was paralysed.

Resignation of
the Ministry.

CHAPTER IV.

LORD SALISBURY'S MINISTRY, July 22, 1886, to August 16, 1892.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Lord Salisbury.
"	Mr. W. H. Smith (Jan. 1887).
"	Mr. A. Balfour (Oct. 1891).
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Lord Randolph Churchill.
"	Mr. Goschen (Jan. 1887).
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Halebury.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Lord Cranbrook.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Cadogan.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Matthews.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Idlesleigh.
"	Lord Salisbury (Jan. 1887).
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Mr. Stanhope.
"	Sir Henry Holland (Jan. 1887).
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Mr. W. H. Smith.
"	Mr. Stanhope (Jan. 1887).
<i>Indian Secretary,</i>	Lord Cross.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Lord George Hamilton.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Lord Stanley.
"	Sir M. Hicks-Beach (Oct. 1888).
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Mr. Cecil Raikes.*
<i>Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Lord John Manners.
<i>President of Local Government Board,</i>	Mr. Ritchie.
<i>President of Board of Agriculture,</i>	Mr. Chaplin (Aug. 1889).
<i>Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,</i>	Lord Londonderry.*
<i>Chief Secretary for Ireland,</i>	Earl of Zetland (May 1889).*
"	Sir M. Hicks-Beach.
"	Mr. A. Balfour (March 1887).
"	Mr. Jackson (Feb. 1892).
<i>Lord Chancellor for Ireland,</i>	Lord Ashbourne.

* Not in the Cabinet.

THE conduct of the Liberal Unionists relieved Lord Salisbury from all difficulty in the formation of his Ministry. So completely was the balance of parties in their hands, that he seems at first to have had some intention of forming a Coalition Ministry, united on the one point of opposition to Home Rule. He is said even to have offered to hold office under the leadership of Lord Hartington. But the Liberal Unionists declined for the present at all events to break loose from their old party ties, or to surrender all hope of a reconstitution of the party. They preferred to stand aloof, giving a general support to the action of the Government, and ready to unite heartily with it in frustrating the policy of Mr. Gladstone with respect to Ireland. Lord Salisbury was thus free to form his Ministry from among the members

Liberal Unionists decline to join the Ministry, July 1886.

of the Conservative party. But it was impossible entirely to disregard the opinions and tendencies of the allies to whom he owed his position. Indeed, the movement of national thought on most subjects had been so markedly in a Liberal direction, that its recognition had become necessary. Ever since the establishment of the new constituency, active politicians had felt the necessity of securing its support. A party, not very well defined but of growing importance, who were roughly spoken of as "The Tory Democrats," had come into existence, and had found a spokesman and leader in Lord Randolph Churchill. On many points it was difficult to distinguish his views from those of an advanced Liberal. He had constantly urged the necessity of making use of young men in full touch with the popular feeling; and he had so far persuaded Lord Salisbury to adopt his views, that he now found himself, somewhat to the surprise of the public, made Chancellor of the Exchequer in the new Ministry, and intrusted with the leadership of the House of Commons.

Lord Randolph Churchill Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Though this appointment may have given promise of a liberal treatment of social questions in England, it could scarcely fail to be very irritating to the Irish and the Home Rulers. Not only had Lord Randolph Churchill always exhibited bitter antagonism to the Home Rule scheme, and expressed his disapproval in violent and contemptuous language, but early in this year he had visited the north of Ireland, and had there, in his attempt to rouse the temper of the Orange minority, used such vehemence that his language appeared to many to be nothing less than an incitement to rebellion. His visit had been followed by violent riots in Belfast, which continued to break out again and again for more than a year, causing much loss of property and even of life. It was therefore only natural that when, as Leader of the House, Lord Randolph Churchill (August 1886) sketched the policy of the Government, his adversaries should find a dangerous meaning in his studiously guarded words. He explained that breaches of social disorder were to be suppressed by means of the ordinary law, so as to allow the legislation of their predecessors a fair chance of success; and that a scheme of local government was to be produced applicable to all the four kingdoms which constituted Great Britain.

Consequences of his visit to Belfast.

His words were at once treated as an invitation to the landlords of Ireland to use to the full their legal powers, and as a promise that the executive would do its best to support them. No such incitement was necessary. The Irish

Effect of his speech on the Irish landlords.

had accepted the failure of Mr. Gladstone's legislation with remarkable patience. The introduction of the Home Rule Bill had filled them with hope; to them its rejection was not a mere party defeat, it was little less than a great national disaster; yet, probably hoping that the Liberal party might still succeed in healing its internal dissensions, they had kept reasonably quiet. But economical pressure touches more closely than political defeat, and the condition of Irish agriculture in the face of falling prices was becoming daily worse. The general depression had seriously affected Ireland after the recent settlement of judicial rents, and the tenants now declared that even those reduced payments were beyond their means. On the other hand, it was not unnatural that the landlords, who regarded the Land Act of 1881 as a final settlement for which they had paid an enormous price, should have thought it right to insist upon the payment of their legal demands. In some instances they had mercifully held their hand, but undoubtedly evictions had largely increased, and no incitement to stricter measures seemed needed.

Increase of
evictions.

It was the tenants rather than the landlords who required support. But no immediate assistance could be expected. A Commission had been issued to inquire into the working of the Land Act, and until it reported, as Lord Randolph Churchill had said, the law was to take its course. An amendment in favour of evicted tenants, moved to the Address (August 24) by Mr. Parnell, had been thrown out. Lord Hartington and his friends had gone even beyond the Conservatives in their opposition to it, and in their assertions of disbelief in the incapacity of the tenants to meet their rents.

A few weeks later a more definite attempt to move the Government was made by the Irish leader, when he brought in a Tenants' Relief Bill (September 10, 1886). This Bill proposed three things: that leaseholders should be admitted to the benefit of the Land Act; that power should be given to both landlord and tenant to appeal to the Court for an alteration of the judicial rent; and that the Land Court should be authorised to stay eviction when the tenant had paid half the rent. Of these three, the last was at the instant by far the most important. That there was a real need for some such measure seems certain. The Government, through their agent, Sir Redvers Buller, who had been sent on an ill-defined mission to the disturbed districts, and through the Irish Secretary himself, were compelled to use their influence to induce the landlords to refrain from pressing their demands. Mr. Parnell's Bill however was, almost as a matter of

Parnell's
Tenant Relief
Bill rejected.

course, rejected (September 27). The Liberal Unionists through Lord Hartington, the Conservatives by the voice of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, while acknowledging that there were cases in which the tenants were incapable of paying the rent, joined in deprecating any general change or revision of the existing Land Law.

Mr. Parnell had not been sparing in prophecies, which were little short of threats, of the agitation which might be expected to follow the rejection of his measure; and it was not long before his prophecies were fulfilled. Less than three weeks after its rejection, the "Plan of Campaign," which was to play so large a part in the difficulties of the coming months, was indicated by Mr. Dillon in a speech at a meeting of Lord Clanricarde's tenants at Woodford. There is no doubt that Lord Clanricarde, an absentee landlord, had refused to listen to any arguments in favour of mercy, and had proceeded to eviction when the tenants in their distress refused to pay rents which they could not afford. The evictions had been the occasion of much disturbance and violence. It was under these circumstances that Mr. Dillon sketched a plan, which was subsequently accepted by the National League, and published in set form in *United Ireland*. The plan was ingenious. It was not to be universal in its action, but to be carried out by the tenants of each estate on which it might be needed. The tenants were to organise themselves, and to agree upon the amount of rent which they could afford. This they were to offer to the landlord, and if he refused it, they were to pay it over to a committee, which was to take charge of it and employ it in carrying on the struggle with the landlord. "There is thus," said *United Ireland*, "practically a half-year's rent of the estate put aside to fight the landlord. This is a fund which, if properly utilised, will reduce any landlord in Ireland." The plan was at once accepted, but was not actually used on more than some forty estates. So dangerous a movement forced the Irish question to the front. During the recess the Government attempted to check it by the apprehension of Mr. Dillon and Mr. William O'Brien. The attempt was a failure; for these leaders, when discharged on bail, continued to carry on their agitation as before. It became a matter of deep interest to know what line the Government would take when Parliament reassembled (January 27, 1887).

Before that event a somewhat unexpected change had taken place in the Ministry. Lord Salisbury had found it necessary to part with the eccentric and unmanageable ally, with whose popular views he had hoped to

The "Plan of
Campaign,"
Oct. 1886.

Changes in the
Ministry.
Jan. 4, 1887.

strengthen the Government. Just before Christmas Lord Randolph Churchill suddenly resigned. The avowed cause of his resignation was inability to agree in the large expenditure his colleagues were contemplating for the army and navy, but there were probably other points of difference. In regard to the intended Local Government Bill and to foreign policy, as well as to the amount of coercion necessary in Ireland, he was believed to hold views not in accordance with those of the Prime Minister. At all events his resignation was at once accepted and no efforts were made to retain his services. Lord Salisbury was now free to attempt once more a coalition with the Liberal Unionists. Again the chiefs of the two sections of that party, Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain, remained firm to their purpose of maintaining their position as Liberals except on the one point of Ireland. But Mr. Goschen, who had already given proof, by voluntarily excluding himself from office, of his disapproval of one of the most important steps the Liberal party had taken, felt justified under the present circumstances in transferring his allegiance. There was indeed but little in the avowed policy of the Government with which a Liberal of the old school could not heartily agree. Mr. Goschen

Mr. Goschen
Chancellor of
the Exchequer.

accepted the vacant office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. As all other Liberal Unionists declined to join Lord Salisbury, the reconstitution of the Ministry was confined to departmental changes. The Leadership of the House fell to Mr. W. H. Smith, with the post of First Lord of the Treasury. Lord Iddesleigh surrendered Foreign Affairs into the hands of Lord Salisbury himself, and shortly afterwards closed a life of singularly amiable and consistent statesmanship. Sir Henry Holland joined the Cabinet as Minister for the Colonies, and the Hon. E. Stanhope as Secretary for War.

Much more important was the opportunity which seemed to be afforded for the reconstitution of the Liberal party. The Radical section of the Unionists could not but feel that on every point of vital interest except Ireland they still thought with their old friends. The idea was suggested, and at once accepted, that a small number of representatives of the various sections should meet, and find if possible some line of policy on which they could all agree. Hence arose the Conference which is known as "The Round Table."

The Round-
table Confer-
ence.

Unfortunately it came to nothing. Who was to blame, or where the rupture actually occurred, it is difficult to say. Such accounts as could be gathered from the words of the various members of the meeting were not easy to reconcile.

But it is plain that the disagreements were not likely to be smoothed away by the utterances of so incisive an orator as Mr. Chamberlain. There was moreover too well-marked a line of severance to allow of a reunion, and probably also too strong a mistrust of Mr. Gladstone to allow of any terms which did not contain a distinct surrender on his part. Although this definite effort failed, there was constantly an undercurrent of effort and suggestion that some reconstitution of the Liberal party might be arrived at. The possibility of such a union had a strong effect upon the legislation of the Conservative Ministry.

The amount of time wasted on the debate on the Address seemed to prove the inadequacy of even the amended rules of procedure under which it was carried on. Moreover, ^{New rules of procedure.} certain disagreeable incidents arising from the exercise by the Speaker of the power intrusted to him to decide when the time of closure had arrived, warned the House that a responsibility had been placed upon him which might render his position intolerable. The chief feature of the new rules, which were carried (March 18, 1887) after much angry opposition, was the removal from the Speaker of the greater part of this responsibility. Henceforward any member was competent to move the closure with leave from the Chair; the motion was to pass without discussion, and, if it proved to be adequately supported, was to put an end to the debate. Armed with this new weapon against obstruction, the Government proceeded to introduce their two Irish measures, the Crimes Bill in the Lower House, the Land Bill in the House of Lords.

The Criminal Law Amendment Bill differed materially from the ordinary Coercion Acts of previous Ministries; it was chiefly intended to clear the way for legislation of a ^{Criminal Law Amendment Bill.} more conciliatory character than any which had yet emanated from the Conservative side. To meet the ever-recurring unrest of the Irish, two methods had always presented themselves, repression or conciliation. A combination of the two had formed the usual basis of the Liberal treatment of the difficult problem; but constant failure had driven the Liberals to the frank acceptance of one branch alone of the alternative, and the Home Rule Bill had expressed Mr. Gladstone's large conception of what conciliation meant. The keynote of the Conservative policy had hitherto been repression. The rejection of the Home Rule Bill, coupled with agricultural distress and the agrarian agitation which had taken form in the "plan of campaign," had again raised the old question in its most acute form. Even if long experience of failure had not discredited special Coercion Acts,

the constitution of the present Ministry forbade the introduction of such a measure. A Ministry which depended for its existence upon its alliance with men whose sympathies were entirely Liberal except on the one point of the maintenance of the union, could not afford to follow the old repressive policy of the Conservative party; the already expressed determination of the Government to attempt to rule Ireland by the ordinary law was generally understood as a confession of this impossibility. Conciliation in some form could no longer be avoided; and the idea had been conceived that, under the form of local self-government, a system of administration might be established more popular and more in accordance with Irish ideas than that which now existed. But it appeared a grave mistake to set on foot any such plan of decentralisation without first safeguarding social order, without placing in the hands of the central authority sufficient means of protecting the interests of the minority. To establish Local Government under the shadow of a Coercion Act was almost a contradiction in terms; and the Government, having brought themselves to confess that Ireland had characteristics of its own and required special arrangements, determined to introduce, instead of a temporary Coercion Bill, a permanent alteration in the criminal procedure of the country. The undoubtedly disturbed condition of much of Ireland, with the prevalence of agrarian outrages, was largely caused by the existence of combinations which practically set up a law different from and antagonistic to the ordinary law. The aim of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was to restrain these combinations by placing extraordinary powers in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant. He was authorised to declare leagues or combinations illegal, and to proclaim disturbed districts, which were then to pass under a system which was little less than arbitrary government. Side by side with the danger arising from leagues and combinations went the extraordinary difficulty of convicting accused persons; even when the evidence against them was of the strongest character, juries refused to find them guilty. In order to withdraw criminal trials from the influence of organised intimidation or local sympathy, the new law contemplated, under certain circumstances, the transference of the proceedings not only to a different part of Ireland, but altogether into England.

The Criminal Law Amendment Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on the 28th of March. Mr. Balfour made a good case for the necessity of some change in the criminal law; 970 persons were under special police protection, and the cost, which was thrown on the ratepayers, was no

Introduction of
the Crimes Bill,
March 28,
1887.

less than £350,000 a year. The judges had again and again drawn attention to the prevalent lawlessness and to the extreme difficulty of obtaining witnesses or verdicts. As a striking instance, he quoted the words of Mr. Justice Murphy when a verdict of "Not guilty" had been returned: "Gentlemen, your verdict is contrary to the evidence; it is your privilege to disregard the evidence and your oaths." These results Mr. Balfour traced to intimidation, exercised indirectly, if not directly, by the National League. "We cannot forget," he said, "that the League leans in part upon those dark secret societies who work by dynamite and the dagger, whose object is anarchy, and whose means are assassination." The first reading of the Bill aroused the liveliest opposition, and was only secured by the movement of the closure amid a scene of wild confusion. The second reading gave rise to an incident which, though at the time it passed over without result, made a deep impression, and, when coupled with further accusations of a similar nature, was the beginning of those exciting and dramatic events which attended the Parnell Commission in the following year. The suggestion of Mr. Balfour as to the character of the National League was repeated as a definite accusation by Colonel Sanderson, the leader of the Ulster Unionists. He declared that the Executive Committee of the Land League contained in it treasonable persons and murderers, and that Mr. Parnell and his friends were aware of it. Both Mr. Healy and Mr. Sexton gave Colonel Sanderson the lie direct, and after much dispute the accusation was withdrawn. A few days afterwards (April 18) there appeared in the *Times* what purported to be a facsimile letter of Mr. Parnell, dated May 15, 1882, which, if it had been genuine, seemed to prove that he had countenanced the murder of Mr. Burke. Mr. Parnell declared the letter to be a forgery, and reiterated his disapproval of the murder in the strongest terms. Immediately after this denial the second reading of the Bill was passed.

Second reading of the
Crimes Bill.

In Committee the opposition was continued with even greater vehemence. Every word in the Bill produced amendments pushed to division, until at length, on the 10th of June, Mr. W. H. Smith moved and carried that, the Bill having already occupied thirty-five days, the remaining clauses should be put to the House without debate, unless the Committee had completed its work by ten o'clock on the 17th of June. At the fatal hour, the Committee having only reached the 6th clause, Sir Charles Russell, who was speaking, was interrupted, and the remaining clauses were immediately passed without division. The Irish members protested by rising in a body and marching out of the

House. A similar scene attended the closure of the debate at the Report stage; but, as is usual in the case of such protests, the only result was the comparative ease with which all amendments were rejected; and, on the 18th of July, the Bill passed into law.

Hand-in-hand with this stringent Bill went a remedial measure, introduced in the House of Lords on the 31st of March. There was a tolerable consensus among the various sections of the Unionists in favour of largely increasing the purchase clauses of the previous Land Acts. The dual ownership, called into general existence by Mr. Gladstone's legislation, was regarded as the chief cause of the tenants' discontent; its destruction, and the substitution of small holdings in full property, was the object to be aimed at. This had indeed been the object of Mr. Gladstone's last unfortunate Land Bill. The chief objection urged against that Bill had been the risk run by the English taxpayer of being called upon to pay an enormous sum; some method had therefore to be found by which this risk could be avoided. But, while this method was being discovered and formulated, there were other evils demanding instant attention, and it was to these that the Land Bill of the present session was directed.

The report from Lord Cowper's Commission, for which the Government had been waiting, had now arrived. It proved to be in favour of a revision of the judicial rents on the ground of the recent change in agricultural prices. This conclusion the Government rejected; they declined to touch what they called the sanctity of contract, or to disturb what had been intended for a final settlement. But in their Bill they made several concessions; leaseholders, hitherto excluded, were to be allowed to seek a judicial revision of their rents; long leaseholders who had sub-let their lands were to be permitted to break their leases if their tenants' rents were reduced; an evicted tenant might be allowed to remain as a caretaker; the landlord who could get no rent was to be exempted from the payment of rates; and finally, what was most important and was supposed to satisfy the claims of those whose rents were too high, the County Courts were to be given an equitable jurisdiction, the right of allowing time for payment, and the right even of relieving the applicant of all his debts and making him a bankrupt. The Bill, being thus one of concession, and confessedly confined to remedy certain difficulties arising from the legislation of 1881, encountered but slight opposition. Its third reading was carried in the House of Commons on August 6, 1887. It was however

Land Bill introduced, March 31, 1887.

Land Bill carried, Aug. 6, 1887.

but little liked by the Liberal Unionists. The chief objections they found in the Bill were the omission of all power of revision of the judicial rents, and the clause which gave the County Courts the power of relieving an applicant of his arrears only by making him a bankrupt; such an extreme step would no doubt afford him some sort of relief, but at the cost of an undeserved loss of self-respect. To these objections Mr. Chamberlain had given expression in the Lower House, and the feeling of disapproval was so strong, that when the Bill came to the Upper House, Lord Salisbury found it necessary to make several serious changes in it, some of which seemed to touch even the principle of the Bill. On both the chief points of disagreement the Government gave way. The clause with regard to bankruptcy was given up, and under certain limited conditions the revision of judicial rents by the Land Court was allowed. Such serious modifications were a practical surrender to the demands of the Liberal Unionists. So strongly was this felt by the Irish landlords, that they spoke of the acceptance of the amendments as nothing less than an act of betrayal on the part of the Conservative Government.

The Criminal Law Amendment Act in the hands of Mr. Balfour, who, on the 5th of March, had succeeded Sir Michael Hicks-Beach as Chief Secretary for Ireland, was not allowed to remain a dead letter. Indeed, activity was almost forced upon him. The language of Mr. Davitt at Bodyke, where, while supporting the Plan of Campaign, he blamed his party for the moderation of their demands, was a direct challenge to the Government. A proclamation was at once issued, placing Ireland under the Crimes Act; and on Mr. W. O'Brien, as editor of *United Ireland*, continuing to encourage the people in opposition to the police, the National League was declared by the Lord Lieutenant to be a "dangerous association." A regular war between the Nationalists and the Administration was thus begun. Again and again meetings were proclaimed as illegal, again and again they were held in spite of the proclamation. Nor was the disturbance confined to the Irish. English sympathy was excited by the apparent violence of the Administration, and a certain number of the more eager Radicals threw themselves vehemently into the movement, and frequently attended and even addressed the illegal meetings. On the 9th of September a peculiarly disastrous collision took place between the people and the police at Michelstown. There Mr. O'Brien and other leaders had been summoned before the petty sessions. Though they did not appear, the judicial

Mr. Balfour as Irish Secretary.

Michelstown, Sept. 9, 1887.

proceedings were carried on, and warrants issued for their arrest. No sooner was this known than a wild popular meeting was held, the people coming in from all the country round and giving an enthusiastic reception to Mr. Dillon, who was accompanied by Mr. Labouchere and other English members of Parliament. It had always been the policy of the Irish leaders to allow without objection the presence of a Government reporter at their meetings. In the present instance the reporter arrived late, tried to force his way through the closely packed crowd to the platform, and called upon a strong body of police to assist him. Their presence, and perhaps their roughness, roused the anger of the people; the police were unable to effect their object, and were driven back to their barracks. They there, either in fear or anger, fired upon the crowd with fatal result, and were only extricated from their awkward position with great difficulty, and chiefly by the efforts of the Irish leaders. The Coroner's jury brought in a verdict of wilful murder against the inspector and three of the constables; but in spite of this they were not prosecuted. The event remained as an evil memory of coercion unsuccessfully attempted, and of the processes of law set at naught by the authorities. Meanwhile the war, if it may be so called, went on. Of the illegal meetings the most important was one at Woodford, where the troops and police were evaded, and the meeting held at night after the people had apparently dispersed.

**Imprisonment
of W. O'Brien,
Oct. 1887.**

At the end of October Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Sullivan, and Mr. Wilfred Blunt were apprehended, convicted, and imprisoned. An unseemly quarrel then arose between Mr. Balfour and Mr. O'Brien as to the wearing of prison clothes, a quarrel ridiculous enough in itself, but of real interest as showing that, in the eyes of Government, offenders under the new Criminal Law Amendment Act were not regarded as political prisoners, but as ordinary law-breakers.

These violent scenes, and the disaffection of the Irish, were a melancholy blot upon the satisfaction which should have marked the year of the Queen's Jubilee. In many respects the nation had good cause for congratulation; and the august lady, whose fiftieth year of sympathetic rule was being celebrated, might well look back with satisfaction upon the constant growth of her dominions, their advance in wealth, the increased stability of their institutions resting on an ever-widening basis, and the brilliant intellectual and scientific life which had marked her reign. The enthusiastic love of her people, the personal kindness and affection with which she was regarded by all her subjects, exhibited as it

was in the thronging crowds attending the various state functions in which she took a part during the Jubilee week, constituted in one respect their chief value. From a political point of view they were equally valuable as giving outward expression to the strong undercurrent of a desire for some closer connection between the various branches of the empire, so keenly felt at this time. Not only did the presence of Indian Princes and Colonial Governors at the State celebrations tell of the vast extension of the British empire, but the imperial idea (in spite of the unquestioned difficulties which lay in its way) seemed to have taken a first step towards realisation in the Colonial Conference held under the presidency of Sir Henry Holland, and in the establishment of the Imperial Institute as a great memorial of the Jubilee. The Conference was called upon to discuss many subjects of imperial interest, and to suggest points of contact between the scattered parts of the empire. Diverse though the interests involved necessarily were, Lord Salisbury, in his address to the assembled representatives, was able at least to urge the need of mutual defence in face of the growing desire for expansion visible in other nations. Subsequent events have shown that the Prime Minister was right in confining himself to that point. Such changes as are involved in the formation of a great federal empire are of slow development. The attempt to treat them as though they were already made, and to create a single great central exchange of literary, economical, and scientific ideas for the empire, as though the unification of its scattered parts was already effected (and nothing less than this was the intended object of the Imperial Institute), proved premature. The spirit of imperialism however, recognised at the Jubilee and in the incidents which attended it, has lived on, and yearly acquires fresh force.

The closing of the Parliamentary session in this and in subsequent years afforded no respite to political discussion. An opportunity was on the contrary afforded for more unrestrained expressions of opinion. Oration followed oration in unending procession, with a ceaseless reiteration of the old arguments. The persistency of the Irish question, the angry temper which it excited, the rude personalities and the perversities of party spirit which attended it, were seriously interfering with the proper course of national legislation, and threatened to lower the whole standard of public life. A tone of political rancour and animosity, not often seen in English politics, had made its appearance. The Unionist seceders from the Liberal party, feeling the necessity of

**Political
speeches in the
recess, 1887.**

vindicating their position, were unresting in their assaults upon their former leader. Bitter attack produced bitter reply, directed for the most part against Mr. Chamberlain, the head of the Radical wing of the Unionists. The line which separated them from their old friends seemed but slight; even as late as February 28, 1889, Mr. Chamberlain in the House called upon the Liberals to formulate their policy of conciliation in resolutions containing the main points at issue, and said that it was not impossible that he might accept them; and as Mr. Gladstone frequently declared himself ready to make considerable alterations in his late Home Rule scheme, it is difficult to see why the acrimonious dispute should have continued, had not men's minds been distorted by personal antipathy and by exaggerated party spirit.

But, indeed, these two great statesmen were entirely antipathetic.

Gladstone and Chamberlain contrasted.

The overmastering sentiment, the high humanitarian morality, the wide—it may almost be called cosmopolitan—view of politics which characterised the older man, were wanting in Mr. Chamberlain, were even repugnant to his essentially practical mind. His position as a Radical member of a Conservative majority, although difficult and at first sight inconsistent, was perfectly in accordance with his real character. Thoroughly radical in the reforms he wished to produce, he had already declared himself in favour of free education; and he was eagerly bent upon a widespread system of local government that should place in the hands of the people the management of their own affairs. But by nature and by early training he was a keen and self-asserting business man. A bargain with him was a sacred thing, a refusal to pay a legal demand involved bankruptcy; and he would listen to no lessening of legally accumulated arrears, or of revised judicial rents which did not carry with them this necessary consequence. A certain dictatorial habit of mind, serving well to support a firm attitude in business negotiations, made any idea of yielding to clamour repugnant to him. And, before all, he had already conceived and declared in many public utterances his widespread imperial views. His chief objection to Home Rule is well summed up in his own words: "It is a strange form of patriotism to a great empire, to wish to break it in pieces." He was thus a Unionist of the Unionists, a Radical in English politics, and a would-be Liberal in Irish politics if only the Irish would do as they were told and would consent to take the things they really wanted without any dislocation of the central authority. A Radical, a masterful Imperialist, his influence in subsequent years on English politics was destined to be paramount.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Mr. Gladstone laid himself open to the attacks levelled against him. While upholding his opinions on wide principles of statesmanship, and declaring his willingness to forego all the objectionable features of his late scheme, he declined to give even the outlines of any new definite plan. He thus certainly gave an opening for mistrust, of which his opponents took full advantage. Unfortunately also he allowed himself to be carried away by his overwhelming eagerness, and made use of expressions which could easily be distorted into assertions in favour of lawlessness. Thus, at the great Liberal Conference at Nottingham, in October 1887, while distinctly declining to lay down any definite plan of action, he went so far as to state that he would not allow any proposals he had previously made, or any opinions he had held, to stand in the way of the settlement of the great question. "I think it is a wide pledge that I give in saying that neither as to the retention of Irish members; nor as to the use of the imperial credit in the purchase of Irish land; nor as to the delegation instead of surrender of power to the Irish Parliament; nor as to the mode of action and the particulars or the times under which the administrative system is to be altered from one that is English and anti-national in spirit to one that is Irish and national in spirit;—to the whole of those proposals the declaration I have made applies. And rely upon it, that neither I nor any infirmities of mine will stand in the way of a settlement desired by the two countries." Yet at the same meeting, in an earlier speech, he had made a bitter attack on the administration of the law in Ireland; he had not scrupled to accuse the police of acting with illegality and brutality; he even implied that they had been guilty of conspiring for the murder of innocent men; he had declared that the disastrous riot at Michelstown must not be forgotten, but must be repeatedly mentioned, "with a view to the formation of a sound opinion in England, in order that the pestilent declarations of Mr. Balfour may not be adopted, as they might be with great excuse, by subordinate agents, and may not be a means of further invasion of Irish liberty or possibly of further destruction of Irish life."

Gladstone's speeches on Ireland.

Words such as these were certainly open to the charge freely brought against them that they were incitements to lawlessness; and the wisdom of such rhetorical denunciations of the police might well be questioned in view of the disturbed feeling prevalent among a portion of the lower classes in England at this time, and of such demonstrations of the spirit of

Imprudence of Gladstone's speeches.

disorder as had been given by the riots in Trafalgar Square in February 1886, and again in October 1887.

For some months meetings of Socialists and of men out of work, either *bonâ fide* unemployed or men drawn from that lowest stratum of society which is permanently unemployed at its own desire, had been held in Trafalgar Square. Encouraged by the vacillating action of Sir Charles Warren, head of the Metropolitan police, at one time positively forbidding access to the Square, at another as hastily withdrawing his prohibition, the Socialists and unemployed had renewed their meetings. Disorderly crowds had marched to the Mansion House, and only a few days before Mr. Gladstone's speech at Nottingham had pushed their way into Westminster Abbey (October 16). The conflict between the forces of disorder and of order reached a climax on Sunday, November 13, 1887. Under colour of protesting against the imprisonment of Mr. W. O'Brien, and for the purpose of testing their disputed right, the Radical leaders called a meeting; and, in spite of the prohibition of Sir Charles Warren, processions from all parts of London converged upon Trafalgar Square. With much serious fighting and free use of their truncheons, the police, who had occupied the Square in the early morning, succeeded in maintaining their position. But so dangerous was the crisis, that it was found necessary to call out the troops and prepare for reading the Riot Act. No lives were lost, but many serious injuries were inflicted on both sides. Several of the more prominent assailants were arrested, among them Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Cunningham Graham, a member of Parliament. The result of the contest was however regarded as uncertain, and the popular leaders determined to repeat, on the following Sunday, their effort to test the right of meeting. Misled by Mr. Gladstone's eloquence, they applied to him to sanction their proceedings. Their application, as they might have expected, produced a clear declaration that the duty of the citizen was to respect the officers of the law, whether well or ill advised. This reply, removing all doubt as to the sympathy of the Liberal leader, induced them to change their place of assembly to Hyde Park. Yielding to a somewhat groundless panic, the Home Office summoned 30,000 special constables to the assistance of the police. A comparatively small number volunteered but proved quite sufficient, and the day passed off quietly.

The imprisonment of Mr. John Burns and Mr. Cunningham Graham, and the desire attributed to the Ministry of putting unconstitutional

**Trafalgar
Square Riots.
Oct. 1887.**

**Hyde Park
meeting.**

limits to the right of free meetings, formed fruitful topics of discussion. But the common-sense view that the orderly traffic of the streets should not be interrupted, and that the police were properly charged with the duty of securing it, prevailed. In spite of a vague socialistic sentiment, the deeply rooted conservatism of all classes of Englishmen did not allow of any serious growth of revolutionary theories, and before long the agitation ceased. No doubt it had had its effect; unusual theories of society were listened to with greater respect, and more attention was paid to the advantages which might be derived from social legislation. But for the most part the form which these aroused feelings took was connected with the facts which had allowed the socialist theories to make themselves heard, rather than with the theories themselves. Men's minds became full of the necessity of ameliorating the condition of the poor and the unemployed. A committee of important people was formed to consider it, under Lord Compton; and a deputation from this committee consisting of such leading men as Lord Herschell, Cardinal Manning, and the Bishop of Bedford, waited on the Prime Minister to discuss the question (February 1, 1888). It is much to Lord Salisbury's credit that, fully awake as he was to the sufferings of the poor, he was strong enough to resist the pressure of sentiment, and to declare clearly that, though the objects of the deputation met with his deepest sympathy, he was convinced that "any attempt on the part of the State to step into the place of the employer would only result in producing more frightful and permanent misery than it was designed to remedy." This position he maintained and reasserted two years later. The desire for social amelioration continued steadily to increase; it infected all classes, and, to judge by the abortive Bills introduced, and the occasional suggestions of individual members of Parliament, there was a widespread demand for the legislative regulation of many matters hitherto regarded as better left to individual management.

The unending dispute between labour and capital, the apparently insoluble difficulty of bringing under one head the advantage of employer and employed, were specially prominent at this time. The years 1889 and 1890 were full of the sounds of this industrial war. Strikes, some of which threatened the most necessary processes of life, were of constant occurrence. At one time it seemed as though the supply of coal might be stopped, at another that London might be in darkness from the want of gas, or that the crowded traffic of the streets might be dislocated by a strike of all the omnibus-drivers. Even the civil services were affected, and signs of organised

**Deputation to
Lord Salisbury,
Feb. 1888.**

insubordination were seen both in the Police and in the Post-office. But by far the most important of all the many strikes was that of the

Dock Strike, 1889.

London dock labourers in August 1889, not only because it seemed for a time to threaten the very existence of the port of London, but chiefly as being the first great attempt to organise unskilled labour. There could be no question as to the miserable condition of the dock labourers. The element of uncertainty, which is the chief hardship of the labourer's life, was felt by them in an exaggerated form. Except a limited number who were engaged as permanent servants of the company, the great body of dock labourers were never sure of employment for a day or an hour together. Crowded together at the entrance to the docks in numbers far beyond the ordinary requirements, they awaited any scraps of work which the arrival of a ship or any temporary exigencies of the docks might throw in their way. Even when employed their pay was but 5*d.* an hour. For some years, under the intelligent leadership of two dock labourers, Benjamin Tillett and Thomas Mann, they had been gradually learning that only by organisation could they hope to improve their condition. At length, on the 13th of August, a general strike took place in all the docks. Their chief demands were for the addition of a penny an hour to their wages, and the assurance that, if engaged at all, they should not receive less than 2*s.* All kinds of workmen employed in the docks joined in the movement, until the strikers numbered nearly 100,000, and the work came to a complete standstill. In some instances the merchants and their clerks performed the absolutely necessary duties. An amalgamation which had lately taken place brought the men face to face with a joint committee of all the great dock companies at once. This committee was willing to agree to the minimum wage of 2*s.*, but refused to listen to further claims. For nearly five weeks the struggle continued. The loss to all parties was enormous, the suffering of the wretched dock labourers and their families can scarcely be exaggerated. At length a committee of volunteer sympathisers, including the Lord Mayor, the Bishop of London, and Cardinal Manning, succeeded in arriving at some sort of compromise, by which the chief claims of the men were satisfied.

General sympathy with the strike.

It was a terrible incident in the great industrial war; but its importance is chiefly to be found in the sympathy with which the strikers were regarded by the public, and in certain indications in it which seemed to threaten a general combination of labour against capital. The subscriptions received, not only from England, but from the Colonies,

were so large that, after satisfying all claims to compensation, the Strike Committee are said to have had £5000 left in their hands. In the height of the struggle a manifesto was issued, definitely calling upon all classes of workmen to make common cause with the strikers; there seemed for the moment a chance of a general breakdown of the existing social system. It is greatly to the credit of the men that little or no outrage was committed, and to the credit of the administration that the police were carefully held aloof from the quarrel. In spite of the very threatening symptoms in all parts of England, employers and employed settled their differences among themselves, and the decisions of the general meeting of Trades Unions held at Dundee in the autumn of 1889 seemed to show that the anti-socialist feeling of these Unions was still paramount. An inquiry sent out by the Dundee Congress to discover the opinion of workmen as to legislative establishment of an eight hours' day received only a limited number of answers, but of these the large majority were in the negative.

Yet the effect of the dock strike was remarkable. It led to the establishment of what is known as the New Unionism, which differed from the principles on which Trades Unions had hitherto rested, by acknowledging the claims of unskilled labour and recognising the solidarity of the interests of the whole working-class, whether artisan or agriculturalist. And with this went a general feeling, not confined to the working-class, in favour of municipal or legislative interference, some approach in fact to State socialism. This was strikingly illustrated in the Trades Union Congress of the following year, 1890, by the changed tone of the leaders and the stress that was laid on municipal action; and it found a practical expression in Parliament in the proposal to fix an eight hours' day, at all events for work in the coal mines. Both Lord Randolph Churchill and Mr. Chamberlain made declarations which seemed to imply that the interference of the State in such questions might under certain circumstances be allowed. But again Lord Salisbury set his face against all legislative interference, and, in his speech at Guildhall in November 1890, strongly deprecated all interference between capital and labour. He threw scorn on the Eight Hours' Bill and all similar hindrances to individual freedom, which would only frighten capital away from England and settle it elsewhere. The workmen would be the first to suffer, "on whose behalf unwise theorists and timid or interested politicians were preaching various arrangements such as the modern world had never seen, and which

savoured of the darkest superstitions by which industries were ever oppressed."

In these lengthened disputes affecting the distribution of property, Lord Salisbury had consistently maintained his Conservative attitude; yet the whole course of his policy was profoundly influenced by the alliance into which he had been forced. It was indeed impossible for a Minister, who owed his tenure of power to the support of those who had long been his most active opponents, to avoid making very important concessions. Lord Salisbury frankly admitted that this was the case. At a meeting of the party held at Liverpool as early as January 11, 1888, he had warned his Tory supporters that they must expect to find a strong tinge of Liberalism in the propositions of the Government, and urged them, for the sake of the great imperial object which he and they alike had in view, to consent to some necessary compromise. This confession of their leader was of the deepest significance, for it implied the almost complete disappearance of the old Conservative party. It became constantly more evident that all possibility of the reunion of the fragments of the old Liberal party was passing away, and that an alliance so firm as that which bound the Liberal Unionists to the Conservatives must sooner or later lead to a complete fusion. It was impossible to suppose that the self-denial exercised by Lord Hartington and his friends would last for ever, or that men of such leading character could be permanently excluded from the Government. Already one of the most distinguished representatives of the Conservative wing of the Liberal Unionist party had found it possible to cross the line and join the Government. But though the transference of Mr. Goschen's great ability to the government side of the House marked the formal alliance of the Liberal and Conservative Unionists, a more practical and combative ally was found in Mr. Chamberlain, hitherto the leader of the advanced Radicals. It was not without surprise that he was seen to adopt a line of conduct apparently in contradiction to all his previous political life; yet this surprise, natural though it was at the time, was not wholly well grounded. With one section of the party included under the general name of Conservative, his energetic and constructive character was in no way at variance; the young Tory Democrats were almost as eager as he was for practical reforms; the Radical leaven found in them a ready-made material on which to work. It appeared certain that, sooner or later, room must be found in the Unionist Ministry for Mr. Chamberlain. Meanwhile, the views which he represented influenced the action of the Government so largely, and its

*Influence of
the Liberal
Unionists.*

measures were in themselves of so Liberal a tendency, that the opposition they encountered was seldom based upon principles, but consisted in criticism of methods and details, and was exercised in a spirit of party which it is difficult not to stigmatise as perverse.

It was in his recognition of the necessity of not merely an alliance but a fusion with his late opponents, and the skill with which it was effected without any breach of party continuity, almost without remark, that Lord Salisbury's wisdom as a party leader is chiefly to be found. He appears to have succeeded in winnowing from the mass of party passion and contemporary interest the principles which he believed to be necessary for the conservation of the Constitution, and to have devoted himself chiefly to maintaining them. Fully awake to the danger of the compromise to which he was consenting, he was at the same time keenly alive to the loss of prestige which the disintegration of party ties inflicted on the Lower House. He was thus led to seek in the House of Lords for a firm standing-ground on which to rest his policy. His use of the constitutional powers of the Lords, his constant employment of members of the Upper House in high places in the Civil Service and in the Cabinet, are characteristic marks of the policy he henceforward pursued. Looking to the other side of the question, it would appear to have been this very spirit of compromise shown by Lord Salisbury, and the readiness with which he accepted the suggestions of his Liberal allies, which imparted a curiously factious air to the conduct assumed at this time by the Opposition and its great leader. Mr. Gladstone had grasped with characteristic tenacity the one great truth, that justice required the conciliation of Ireland; that coercion, even though coupled with large concessions and good administration, would fail to produce this conciliation; that it was in fact to be found only in listening to what he believed to be the voice of the nation, and in placing trust in the Irish to work out their own prosperity. This conviction had now become so strong in him, that no half measures, however good in themselves, were tolerable to him; no legislation, however important, seemed of any value so long as the one great act of justice, which was to relieve England from an overwhelming incubus and to satisfy the aspirations of the kindred nation, was left unperformed. Home Rule for Ireland had in fact become his sole object. Unfortunately for his party, the people of England had declared themselves very distinctly at the last election. An overwhelming majority firmly opposed to his object faced him in the House of Commons.

*Lord Salisbury
as a party
leader.*

*Gladstone's
devotion to Home
Rule.*

Home Rule was entirely beyond his reach. But as it was the only object which he now regarded as of supreme importance, his followers were practically reduced to a condition of complete impotence. When measures scarcely differing from those they might themselves have initiated were offered them, their only weapon was constant carping criticism of details, sinking sometimes to obstruction. Though powerful enough to render legislation difficult, they had little or no power to influence it. Irish policy, affording unlimited scope for criticism, and handled by men really in earnest, became unduly prominent in Parliament during the whole of this administration.

The words the Prime Minister had addressed to his followers at the Liverpool meeting were intended to prepare them for the introduction of the Local Government Bill, which was to be the great measure of the session. In the speech from the Throne it was this measure, and its accompanying financial arrangements, which occupied the prominent place. But before it could be approached, there was the inevitable discussion upon Irish affairs, in the debate upon the Address. The Crimes Act of the last year had been vigorously worked by Mr. Balfour, and the Government now took credit to themselves for its success. "The result of this legislation has been satisfactory. Agrarian crime has diminished, and the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated." This sentence of the Queen's Speech was a direct challenge to the Irish party. Though the Irish Secretary produced statistics showing a considerable diminution of crimes connected with political agitation, the improvement was attributed by the Opposition to very different causes. To them it was the natural outcome of the ray of hope which the alliance with the English Liberals had thrown upon the desire of the Nationalists, and was by no means due to the drastic measures of the Administration. How drastic these had been was shown by the assertion of Sir George Trevelyan, that "of the eighty-five Irish Nationalist members, one out of every seven was in prison, on his way to prison, or on his way out of prison." The arrest of Mr. Sullivan, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and his speedy liberation amid expressions of the greatest national rejoicing, the elaborate precautions taken to secure the safety of the leaders of the Liberal Unionists during their visit to Dublin, the refusal of a coroner's jury in Clare to bring in a verdict of murder against the men charged upon strong evidence with killing the head constable, Whelehan, and the success of the Plan of Campaign, of which Mr. W. O'Brien could boast on his return, after his

Meeting of
Parliament.
Feb. 9, 1888.

Debate on
Ireland, Feb.
1888.

imprisonment, to Parliament (February 16), certainly gave no proof of the triumph of Government in conciliating Ireland. There was a strong feeling of exasperation against Mr. Balfour among the Opposition, excited chiefly by his determination to treat offences under the Crimes Act as ordinary breaches of the law, and to obliterate the line which had hitherto been drawn between political offenders and common criminals. Much anger was felt at the sight of members of Parliament condemned to undergo the degrading details of prison discipline for breaches of the Crimes Act. The large Government majority however remained unbroken. There seemed no possibility of a union between the two branches of the Liberals, in spite of occasional indications in Mr. Gladstone's speeches that he himself was ready to accept some compromise. As a matter of course, the amendment moved by Mr. Parnell in favour of remission of arrears was thrown out, and, the Address having been passed, the Government could proceed with the ordinary business.

Their first measure was intended to complete the various experiments in the reform of procedure. They introduced a set of rules (February 24, 1888), by which provision was made for the automatic closure of business at certain fixed hours, and for the prevention of dilatory motions or other forms of obstruction, the closure being finally left in the hands of the majority if it consisted of more than a hundred members.

The great financial measure of the session was then introduced. In the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the financial condition of the country and the low rate of interest prevalent at the time justified an operation for the purpose of lightening the public burdens. Following the example of several of his predecessors, he introduced a Bill (March 9, 1888) lowering the interest of a large amount of the national debt. More than £500,000,000 was the amount thus dealt with. Taught by experience that a gradual diminution of interest was likely to receive the more favourable acceptance, Mr. Goschen suggested that a new stock should be created, bearing for fifteen years interest at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., and after that time at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. which should be guaranteed for the next twenty years. He proposed that a small premium should be given to induce holders to accept the new stock at an early date, and a commission allowed to authorised agents in the transaction. The whole saving to the country in interest was reckoned as likely to be £1,400,000 a year from April 1889 to April 1903, and £2,800,000 a year after that date, when the lower rate of interest would begin.

New procedure
rules.

Mr. Goschen's
conversion
scheme.

The plan was exceedingly well received. The only point which met with much opposition was the payment of a commission to authorised agents. This was attacked with some acrimony as being immoral and dishonest; but the declaration of Mr. Childers from the Opposition side of the House, that a similar plan of conversion introduced by himself had been wrecked by the indifference of the bankers, seemed to justify Mr. Goschen's action. The Bill was carried with almost unanimous approbation; and within one month more than £450,000,000 of the new stock was accepted by the public.

The conversion scheme was shortly followed by the introduction of the Budget. Its main points were the diminution of the income-tax, and an increased contribution from the imperial revenue in aid of local taxation. With respect to the first point, Mr. Goschen declared his opinion that the principle of simplicity of taxation might be carried too far, that the income-tax should be regarded as the great reserve for time of need, and that some extension of the sources of revenue was the proper method of meeting ordinary expenditure. With respect to the second point, he proposed that, instead of the £2,600,000 at present devoted to the assistance of local rates, there should be substituted a sum of £5,500,000. The existing licences, which brought in about £3,000,000, with additional licences amounting to £800,000, added to half the probate duty, would supply the required sum.

This large increase to the relief given to local taxation was connected with the great measure for local government which constituted the real work of the session. The Bill, which was introduced (March 19, 1888) and explained with marked ability by Mr. Ritchie, President of the Local Government Board, had long been expected. It proved to be of a very far-reaching, almost revolutionary, character, so much so that it is impossible to regard it as emanating from a Conservative party in the old meaning of that term. It marks the influence direct or indirect of the Liberal Unionists and the younger men who mingled popular sympathies with their Toryism. The administrative power hitherto belonging to the country gentleman was now to be placed in the hands of popularly elected bodies. In each county was to be established a Council elected on the broad basis already adopted in the Municipal Corporation Act, by which the franchise was extended to all ratepayers. The members, thus directly elected by the voters in electoral districts of comparatively equal extent, constituted three-fourths of the Council, and were authorised to elect, either from among their

own body or from outside, additional members of the Council as Aldermen. The ordinary Councillors held office for three years, the Aldermen for six. To this body was intrusted nearly all the powers which had hitherto been exercised by the Justices of the Peace, with the exception of the judicial power which remained as before, and the management of the police, which was placed in the hands of a joint committee consisting of representatives of the justices and of the County Council. Much fear had been entertained that in any widespread alteration the historic boundaries of the counties would be destroyed; they were however wisely maintained in fixing the limits of the jurisdiction of the County Councils. Below the County Council there were to be District Councils, which took the place of Sanitary and Local Boards, their limits being settled by the County Council. The electors to these District Councils were to be the same as those for the County Council. Large cities, and ultimately all boroughs with a population of 50,000, were withdrawn from the counties, and were supplied with the same administrative apparatus as the County Councils, the Local Boards and other separate authorities being merged in the Corporation of the town. The Metropolis was treated slightly differently. It became a separate county, and took over the same duties as the other counties. The Metropolitan Board of Works was thus destroyed. But the police remained in the hands of the Home Office, and the City except in some points remained under the separate authority of the Corporation. The alterations made in the Bill during its passage through the House of Commons were unusually few. The extension of the county status to boroughs of 50,000 inhabitants had not been originally contemplated; and, much more important, the system of compensation for the withdrawal of licences to public-houses, which had formed a part of the original Bill, was omitted in deference to the widely felt fear of establishing once for all a vested interest in such licences. But with these and a few other minor alterations, the great measure, which entirely changed the source of administrative authority, and made England a self-governing country in all the lesser but deeply important details of ordinary life, passed with universal acceptance, and became law in August 1888. The financial arrangements of the bodies constituted by the Bill were facilitated by the provision of £5,600,000 in aid of rates, which was contemplated in Mr. Goschen's Budget.

To the Opposition the flaw in the generally accepted plan was found in the exception of Ireland from its benefits. Similarity and simultaneity of legislation in the two countries had been part of Lord

Randolph Churchill's programme. Mr. Chamberlain had consistently advocated a large measure of local government in Ireland, and even now he declared that he could only support the measure, confined in its application to Great Britain, on the distinct understanding that the circumstances of the time justified some postponement of the extension of its advantages to the sister kingdom.

The existence of these circumstances was plain enough. There was no cessation of disturbance in Ireland. The whole year was occupied in a violent struggle against the severity with which Mr. Balfour carried out the Crimes Act. Whatever may be thought of its ultimate result, the immediate effect of his action was to increase many fold the angry temper with which the conduct of the Castle administration had long been regarded. Meetings held in all directions though proclaimed by Government; their occasional violent suppression; the inadequate strength of the constabulary requiring the presence of troops; the arrest, trial, and imprisonment of no less than seventeen members of Parliament; the bitter and unjustifiable accusations brought against the Chief Secretary; form all together a scene of disastrous disorder. Physical and moral forces proved inefficacious. Even the voice of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, supported by a very decided letter from the Pope, seemed to have lost its ancient power; a general meeting of the Irish Nationalists denounced the letter as unjust and its assertions as untrue. In spite of all that could be done, the Nationalist members could boast that the "plan of campaign" was successful, that on thirty-eight estates it had produced considerable diminutions of rent.

The language used by the Press in its unjustifiable assaults upon Mr. Balfour not unnaturally provoked language scarcely more moderate in reply. In the severity and truculence of its abuse of the Irish party the *Times* took the lead. Its attacks on Mr. O'Donnell compelled him to bring an action for libel against Mr.

Walter, the proprietor of the paper. There were incidents connected with the trial which caused much complaint. It was pointed out that Mr. Walter had interviewed a member of the Government immediately before the trial began, and that the Attorney-General was acting as chief law adviser of the *Times*. No doubt these incidents were unfortunate, but there was probably no ground for questioning the justice of the trial or for implicating the Government in the action of the newspaper. The case went against Mr. O'Donnell. The accusations were certainly grave,

Disturbed condition of Ireland.

Mr. O'Donnell's action against the "Times."

but it could not be proved that he had been specially singled out for attack. During the trial some letters of a very damaging description, purporting to be the work of the National leaders, were read by the Attorney-General. Among others was the one, dated May 15, 1882, which had already been printed in facsimile in the *Times* of April 18, 1887, in which Mr. Parnell was made to use expressions connecting him with the criminal action of the extreme Nationalists, and even implying a guilty knowledge of the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke. Mr. Parnell had at the time considered it necessary to make an explanation in Parliament, and to declare that the letter was an obvious forgery. He now (July 6, 1888) repeated his assertion, and demanded a select committee to inquire into the matter. This, with questionable wisdom, the Government absolutely refused. They confined themselves to an offer to bring in a Bill appointing a Commission "to inquire into the charges and allegations made against certain members of Parliament and others, defendants in the recent trial." The general terms of this motion rendered it in fact a refusal to examine into the personal charges against Mr. Parnell, and established a judicial Commission charged with the duty of inquiring into the whole action of the two great Irish leagues. The very wide scope of the inquiry was regarded by many with much dislike, and the refusal to afford Mr. Parnell an opportunity of vindicating his character seemed scarcely just. Such as it was, however, the method recommended by the Government met with the approval of the House, and the Bill creating the Commission became law, August 13, 1888.

The Commission consisted of three judges, Sir J. C. Day, Sir A. L. Smith, and Sir James Hannen. Its first meeting was held in September 1888, and its last in November 1889. The Commissioners decided that the inquiry should take the form of a legal trial in which nine formal accusations were brought against the defendants, who were no less than sixty-five in number. The great speeches of Sir Charles Russell on the one side, and the Attorney-General on the other, following as they did the course of Irish history for a considerable number of years, formed as full and consecutive a story of the disturbances as could then be arrived at. Although the questions involved were largely personal, or perhaps for this very reason, few things, though of far more historical importance, have excited such general interest or roused such angry passions as this Commission. For months it was the principal subject on which the eloquence of the Press was exercised, and the common topic of conversation. All the old and half-forgotten outrages were

The Parnell Commission.

again thrust upon public notice, and afforded fresh food to the virulence of the Unionist papers. The final report was not published until February 1890. A whole year before that time, the point on which public interest was centred, the personal charge against Mr. Parnell, had received a signally dramatic refutation. When the authorship of the letter published in facsimile in the *Times*, and purporting to be in Mr. Parnell's handwriting, became the subject of inquiry (February 21, 1889), there appeared in the witness-box a man named Pigott, to whom the letter had been traced. A severe and able cross-examination lasting for two days, conducted by Sir Charles Russell, was followed by the flight of the witness. On the next meeting of the Court, when the examination was to have been continued, Pigott was not there. He had fled to Spain; and before long news reached England of his full confession and suicide (March 1, 1889). As far as Mr. Parnell was concerned, the vindication was complete, and the prosecution was obliged to confess the forgery. But, as Mr. Courtenay, Chairman of Committees, told his constituents, "The verdict, though a triumph for the Irish leader, had no practical result. Whether Mr. Parnell was or was not guilty, the Irish question still remained."

Mr. Courtenay's words unfortunately proved only too true. That the alleged letter of Mr. Parnell was proved to be a forgery, left the real question untouched, though it tended for awhile to increase the power and popularity of the Irish leader. What the exact character of this Irish question was, was by no means certain. To some it appeared a national question, to some political, to some agrarian. The application of remedies would have been an easier matter had this precise character been discovered; but on all hands it was allowed that it included the land question; and the Government were so convinced of this that they were intending to produce a great scheme for its settlement. While preparing a more complete treatment of the subject, they had thought it well to produce a temporary measure; and in the autumn

Extension of
the Ashbourne
Act, Oct. 1888.

session of 1888 they proposed a Bill for the extension of Lord Ashbourne's Act of July 1885. It was hoped that, avowedly partial and temporary as the Bill was, its acceptance might be easily secured. All matter likely to be contentious was omitted, and it was reduced to one simple clause authorising the expenditure of £5,000,000 in order to continue the operation of the existing Act; yet it was only carried after fierce and prolonged opposition. There could be no question as to the success of Lord Ashbourne's Act. Already more than 14,000 applications for agreements between landlords and tenants had been made,

requiring the advance of more than £6,000,000. The applications were confined to no particular part of Ireland, and everywhere the instalments had been regularly paid. In spite however of the increasing desire to take advantage of the Act which was visible even in Connaught, in spite of the proof thus afforded of the general usefulness of the measure in all parts of Ireland, a ground of opposition was found in the possible difficulty of applying its provisions to the poorer and more congested districts, where the poverty of the tenants might render it impossible to find sufficient security to justify the Government advances.

Useful though this stop-gap Act certainly was, it had little effect in preventing the political side of the Irish question from reappearing in an aggravated form in the long debate Irish debate,
Feb. 1889. on the Address which followed the opening of Parliament in 1889. The late arrangements as to procedure had had the unexpected effect of introducing a prolongation of the debate upon the Address, which was one of the most striking changes in the conduct of the Lower House. The limitation which had been laid upon the rights of private members went hand-in-hand with the slackening of close party adhesion. Deprived of their time-honoured opportunities, and no longer satisfied to leave the duties of criticism to a few select leaders, private members took advantage of the debate on the Address to air their individual opinions on all sorts of subjects. In the present instance, among the many amendments one alone was of serious importance. It was that in which Mr. Morley (February 25) summed up in vigorous words the view taken of the existing administration by the Irish members and their friends: "The present system in Ireland is harsh, oppressive, and unjust, violates the rights, and alienates the affections of the Queen's Irish subjects, and is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain." The discussion of this amendment occupied no less than five nights. In all that time scarcely anything new was said. All the well-known complaints against the Government were reiterated, and were met with the old defensive arguments. Perhaps the most effective weapon of the attack was the obliteration under the late Crimes Act of the distinction between offences committed under the name of political agitation and offences which were but the ordinary breaches of law. The defence relied chiefly on the assertion of the gradual improvement of the country. As a matter of course, the amendment was lost and led to nothing.

Meanwhile the Chief Secretary, Mr. Balfour, continued to carry

out consistently the plan, the success of which had, as he believed, justified him in taking credit for the improved condition of Ireland. The firm vindication of the law as laid down in the late Crimes Act was to go hand-in-hand with measures for the amelioration of the social condition of the country. To a superficial view there certainly appeared but little improvement in the feeling of the Irish towards England. Meetings were constantly proclaimed and broken up, and yet surreptitiously held; the "plan of campaign" was still pressed forward, and was producing in Tipperary a great conflict which reached its climax in the following year; there was still the same difficulty in obtaining evidence in prosecutions in favour of the Crown. Either intimidation or national feeling was so strong on this point, that one of the judges publicly declared that he only wondered how any one could be found to give evidence at all. But signs of a more hopeful future were not wanting. The Government had attempted to open out the resources of the country by Bills authorising great schemes of drainage and reclamation of waste lands, and setting on foot a system of light railways (August 27, 1889). The year was prosperous for agriculture; prices were good. The number of tenants purchasing their holdings under the Ashbourne Act was steadily increasing. The disturbed area was becoming more distinctly defined and isolated. Altogether, in spite of the intense friction still visible, there was so much real improvement in the general state of affairs, that it was found possible in January 1890 to relax in eleven counties the action of the Crimes Act.

Even the "plan of campaign" was ultimately brought into discredit with the people by the very violence with which it was pressed in Tipperary. The plan had there been applied on the Ponsonby estate. Exceedingly favourable terms had been offered to the tenants. The refusal of these terms seemed so unreasonable that certain landowners entered into an association for the purpose of supporting the landlord interest which they regarded as their own. One of the best landlords in Ireland, Mr. Smith Barry, put himself at the head of this association. The right of co-operation and joint action, which the Irish Nationalists had been the first to claim for themselves, appeared to them an unpardonable crime when employed by the landlords. They instructed the tenants not to pay rent to Mr. Smith Barry. The greater part of the town of Tipperary belonged to him, and he was obliged to have recourse to eviction. Induced by promises of assistance from the league, and persuaded of

Social im-
provement in
Ireland.

the final success of their movement, the tenants gave up their houses and shops, and all their regular means of livelihood, and moved into "new Tipperary," a long double row of sheds erected for them by the league, just outside the town. There, for the whole of the year 1890, they continued a wretched existence in the belief that the league would certainly assist them. But events soon occurred which touched the Irish leaders more closely than the sufferings of their Tipperary dupes; and at length, in May 1891, after public denunciations of the manner in which they had been deceived, the unhappy exiles approached their former landlord. They found him ready not only to receive their submission but to give them liberal terms; and they returned to their homes in old Tipperary, leaving their ruined shanties as a memorial of the complete failure of their misguided though heroic effort.

Although this was the most conspicuous contest of the year, there were others, such as that on the Glensharrold estate near Ardagh, almost as striking. Of this the chief interest lay in the gradually rising opposition of the heads of the Roman Catholic Church to the extreme forms of the Nationalist movement. The Pope had already given his verdict against it; and although the majority of the clergy were in sympathy with it, and confined their obedience to assuming an attitude of friendly neutrality, there were not wanting both priests and bishops who, following the conspicuous example of Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick, condemned boycotting and refusal of rent in very outspoken language. But though the Church might condemn them, and unfortunate victims of the "plan of campaign" might suffer, the leaders persisted in their "no rent" policy, rendered more acceptable to the people by a threatened failure of the potato crop in August 1890. With equal persistency the Government pursued its course; the Irish leaders were duly apprehended, tried, and imprisoned.

The stormy trial of Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien in Tipperary, from which they had withdrawn forfeiting their bail, was scarcely ended when a catastrophe occurred, which affected primarily the private character of Mr. Parnell, but which in its consequences not only divided the Irish party, but even for the time seemed to paralyze the action of the Opposition in Parliament. A suit was brought in the Divorce Court by a well-known member of the Irish party, in which Mr. Parnell was the respondent. The Court pronounced its judgment in favour of the divorce (November 17, 1890).

Nationalists
condemned by
the Church.

Fall of Mr.
Parnell.

The circumstances which were brought to light in the trial were such as seemed to touch both the morality and the honour of Mr. Parnell. It became at once a question whether his political position could be retained, and whether the English Liberals could consent to work hand in hand with a party of which he was the leader. The first impression among the Irish was that Mr. Parnell's private character need not in any way affect his political position, and at several public meetings renewed confidence was expressed in his leadership, although a few voices, notably that of Mr. Michael Davitt, were raised to urge at least his temporary withdrawal from political life. In England there was a strong expression on the part of the Unionist papers that any further co-operation between the English Liberals and the Irish, led by a man with such a blot on his name, would be little short of disgraceful. From the Home Rule side on the other hand came the opinion that the great question depended upon principles of justice, and not on the personal character of the statesmen who supported it, and that it was not for England to dictate to the Irish as to the choice of the leader to whom they were willing to intrust their cause. It appeared at first as though Mr. Gladstone and his firm supporter, Mr. John Morley, were inclined to this opinion. But Mr. Gladstone's duty was to regard the question from the point of view of a great party leader engaged in attempting to give effect to measures which he and his followers believed to be of vital importance. He was bound to be influenced by the opinion of followers on whom alone he could rely for securing any practical result from his efforts; and the opinion of the Scottish Presbyterians and the English Nonconformists, of whom the bulk of his party consisted, was not long uncertain. They gave it to be understood with perfect clearness that they would not co-operate with the Irish if Mr. Parnell retained his leadership. And Mr. Gladstone, in the interest of Ireland itself and of the cause which he was advocating, could not but accept their opinion. To have defied it must have meant the immediate wreck of the Home Rule movement. He undoubtedly hoped that Mr. Parnell would himself see the difficulty, and would relieve his party from their danger by a voluntary resignation. In this sense he wrote a letter, and placed it in the hands of Mr. McCarthy, to be produced if necessary; that is, if Mr. Parnell did not resign voluntarily at the meeting of the Irish party, which would be held as usual at the beginning of the session.

Any hope of voluntary self-effacement on the part of Mr. Parnell was speedily dissipated. Before the second meeting of the party he

Difficult position of the English Liberals.

issued a manifesto, which virtually transformed the question into one of personal rivalry. The Irish were practically asked whether they would be led by Mr. Gladstone or by Mr. Parnell. To secure their favourable answer, assertions were made with respect to private conversations held between himself, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Morley, which, according to the Irish leader, limited in a disastrous manner the character of the Home Rule Bill which the Liberals were willing to support. And in addition to this, Mr. Parnell declared that proposals had been made to him to take office as Secretary for Ireland in case of the success of the Opposition at the next election. The assertions were categorically denied both by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Morley; and it was pointed out that, even if true, Mr. Parnell in making them had violated the sanctity of conversations in the highest degree confidential. A series of very stormy debates among the Irish party, held in Committee-room No. 15, followed. Efforts were made to procure a conference with Mr. Gladstone, and to pledge him to two at least of the points mentioned in the manifesto, to wring from him an assertion that, in any future Home Rule Bill, the constabulary and the settlement of the land question should be left to the Irish Parliament. Although Mr. Gladstone consented (December 5) to receive the Irish deputation, he refused to commit himself. He took up the position that the question at present was not one concerning the form of the Home Rule Bill, but entirely one of leadership, and that therefore its decision rested with the Irish alone. Mr. Parnell, who still remained chairman of the Irish meetings, fought bitterly and with great ability for the retention of his position against a large majority backed now by the strong influence of the Roman Catholic Church. In face of his personal opposition it was found impossible to take a vote as to his leadership, but on the 6th of December the question was decided by forty-five members walking out of the Committee-room, leaving Mr. Parnell with but twenty-six followers. The majority, thus definitely breaking away from their old leader, chose Mr. Justin McCarthy in his place, with the title of Sessional Chairman.

Great efforts were naturally made to prevent the entire dissolution of the party. Mr. W. O'Brien and Mr. Dillon, both of whom had been tried and convicted in the autumn, but had escaped to America, now came to Boulogne to attempt some arrangement with Mr. Parnell. Their efforts failed, and in February 1891 they returned to London to undergo their term of imprisonment. The actual issues on which the discussion rested were

Parnell's manifesto. Nov. 28, 1890.

Efforts to re-organise the Irish party.

not known. Mr. McCarthy asserted, in a Report produced at a subsequent Anti-Parnellite meeting, that Mr. Gladstone had stated as his view, that the land question must either be settled simultaneously with the granting of Home Rule, or be left to the Irish Parliament, under whose authority the police might also pass after an interval of a few years. With this statement Mr. McCarthy and his followers were satisfied, but Mr. Parnell demanded a written assurance that both questions should be unreservedly left to the Irish legislature. It seems however more probable that the real subject of the Boulogne discussions was the leadership of the party. The attitude taken up by the Roman Catholic hierarchy was so threatening that the Anti-Parnellites may well have thought that the safety of the Irish cause required the retirement of Mr. Parnell. Mr. Dillon indeed declared subsequently that he would have been satisfied had he promised to withdraw for six months only.

On the failure of the Boulogne negotiations, the struggle between the parties assumed a character of great virulence in Ireland. Language (as is not unusual in that country) of the most intemperate character was used on both sides. Mr. Parnell, breaking loose from all restraint, declared the pleasure he felt in his emancipation from servitude to English statesmen, and openly advocated separation. Neither he nor his opponents were scrupulous in the use of personalities. He stigmatised those who had seceded from him as "feeble, cowardly, and traitorous." On the other side Mr. Maurice Healy described him as "an unapproachable trickster, not only a libertine and a liar, but a cowardly sneak," and declared that "any person attempting to patch up the present difference by a compromise on the basis of his leadership should be hunted out of the country with a kettle tied to his tail." Mr. Parnell did not wholly lose his popularity, but his opponents, supported by the full weight of the priestly influence, were too strong for him. He lost much by his refusal to produce the accounts of the National League, and the cause as a whole suffered severely by the entire collapse of the New Tipperary scheme, where the unfortunate tenants were left deserted amid the struggles of their leaders. The issue of the contest

Death of
Parnell, Oct.
1891.

was however still uncertain, when the unexpected death of Mr. Parnell, in October 1891, withdrew the personal element from it, and the party settled down in two sections, the one under Mr. McCarthy, the other under Mr. Parnell's trusty follower, Mr. John Redmond.

The break-up of the Irish party was of great political importance. The Opposition, with their Irish allies, and aided largely by

mismanagement on the part of the Government, had succeeded in throwing obstacles in the way of most of the proposed legislation; an autumn session had again been found necessary, and a continued struggle had been expected. But the Irish disputes had so entirely disorganised the party, that in less than a fortnight two of the retarded Bills were pushed forward almost without opposition to the Committee stage, which was all that the Government had contemplated.

Of these, the most important was the long-promised Land Purchase Bill, which had been introduced by Mr. Balfour on March 24, 1890. In the amelioration of the Irish land laws there were two great branches, and two proposed methods of cure: the one, the improvement of the relation between landlord and tenant; the other, the removal of the landlord and the establishment of the small farmer as a freeholder. It was the first of these methods which Mr. Gladstone had attempted. His Bills of 1870 and 1881 were directed to the establishment, legalisation, and regulation of the interest of the tenant in his holding; an interest acknowledged in different degrees in various parts of Ireland, and finding its most complete form in the Ulster tenant right. The Liberal party had however not been blind to the question of purchase; various attempts had been made to foster it, especially by what are known as "the Bright clauses." To the Unionists, on the other hand, the removal of the dual ownership and the substitution of the single proprietary right of small landowners appeared the true method of cure. Only the very extreme Nationalists desired the compulsory expropriation of the landlords. Mr. Gladstone certainly desired their retention, at all events in sufficient numbers to form a leading class. Recognising the losses which his legislation had inevitably brought upon them, he felt considerable sympathy with them. He was well aware also that the Irish Nationalists were on the whole decidedly favourable to a very wide extension of the freeholding class, and he could not but dread the probability of violent measures to secure this result in any exclusively Irish Parliament. It is indeed difficult to believe that his legislation for the extension and settlement of the tenant's interest, the establishment by statute of what is known as dual ownership, was intended to be permanent; it seems rather as though he was attempting to supply the tenant with something to sell in order to render possible some sort of arrangement for the mutual advantage of landlord and tenant. However this may be, he certainly did not feel it right to place the landlords at the mercy of an Irish Parliament, and his great Land Purchase Bill in 1886 had been directed

The Land Purchase Bill,
March 1890.

to the object of allowing those landlords who disliked the changes in prospect, to free themselves from their disadvantageous position. That Bill was too closely connected with the Home Rule Bill to have any chance of success. But the greatness of its object, and its complete harmony in principle though not in detail with the agrarian policy both of the League and of the bulk of the Conservatives, should be distinctly recognised. The subsequent legislation of the Unionists with respect to land had been avowedly temporary, and had been directed to produce more gradually and by somewhat different methods the same result, that is to say, a peasant proprietary. Upon these lines was framed the Land Purchase Bill, which Mr. Balfour, according to the long-delayed promise of his party, introduced in March 1890. It was a Bill of singular cleverness, with clauses showing much real sympathy for the wants of the Irish people, and elaborate, perhaps over-elaborate, ingenuity in the system of checks and counter-checks by which the liability of the English taxpayer was guarded.

In any scheme of the sort which could possibly obtain the adherence of the imperial Parliament two things were necessary, the absence of compulsory expropriation of landlords, and the employment of British credit without any great risk to the taxpayer. It was thus a first principle of the Bill that all purchases made under it were to be by voluntary agreement between the landlord and the tenant. Many previous difficulties had been caused by the variety and number of the Courts and Departments involved, these were now to be superseded by one Central Department. To this Department was left the settlement of all disputes as to the price to be paid by the purchaser, with the limitation that under no circumstances was it to allow more than twenty years' purchase of the net rental; that is to say, the gross rental, deducting the average amount paid in rates and taxes by the landlord. This was a considerable diminution of the basis on which rent was to be fixed, as compared to that authorised under the Ashbourne Act; on many small holdings where the landlord was obliged to pay the Poors' rate, the deduction approached a third of the rent. The process of acquisition on the part of the purchaser was then simplified. As soon as the Land Department had authorised the purchase, the land became the absolute property of the purchaser without further legal question. The whole of the price, limited as explained above, was to be advanced by England, and to be paid to the seller by a holding in a new funded loan established for the purpose, paying him 2½ per cent., and redeemable at par in thirty years. The safe repayment of this advance was the

Details of the
Land Purchase
Bill.

second great point in the Bill. As under the Ashbourne Act, the purchaser was to repay the advance by an annuity. The payments were to consist of 4 per cent. on the purchase money and were to continue for forty-nine years. Of this sum, 2½ per cent. represented the interest due to the seller, 1 per cent. formed a sinking fund, and the remaining ½ per cent. went to the local authorities for the building and improvement of labourers' cottages. As an additional security, the tenants were to pay for the first five years ¾ per cent. beyond the proper annuity. This surplus, which was credited to them in the later instalments, meanwhile formed an insurance fund to meet default of payments in bad seasons.

The adequacy of the repayment was secured by many intricate arrangements. The main principle was that any default should be met from that share of the revenue which was derived from licences, and from a portion of the probate duties which were paid to Ireland by the imperial Exchequer. Should these prove insufficient, a contingent guarantee was found in the rates on Government property and in the imperial contributions to education and to the Poor Law, money over which the Government had control. The whole capitalised value of the guarantee funds was calculated at £33,000,000; and this was the sum to which advances were limited. It was believed that the advances would only be required gradually, and that the money would be thus capable of use over and over again.

A further difficulty in the solution of the Irish land question arose from the irregular distribution of the inhabitants. There were certain districts, especially in the west, where the population was so thick and the holdings so small, that no system of purchase could afford relief. The people practically lived upon their earnings as labourers elsewhere, and were in no sense dependent on the land; and it was here that the greatest amount of poverty was found. These districts were to be withdrawn from the general scheme and placed under the management of a special Board, known as the Congested District Board, to which large powers were intrusted. It was charged with the duty of amalgamating small holdings, aiding fisheries and emigration, and of giving instruction in such industries as fish-curing, agriculture, and woollen work. The final guarantee for the expenses of this Board was to be the surplus of the Irish Church Fund.

That the Bill should meet with opposition from the Irish Nationalists was almost a matter of course. They had indeed constantly clamoured for schemes of purchase; but now

Opposition to
the Bill.

The Congested
District Board.

they raised the cry that this scheme was quite inadequate, that the sum advanced would not touch more than a fourth of the country, that the suggested instalments being at least 20 per cent. lower than the existing rent was a plain confession that rents were at least that much too high, and that in fact the real intention of the Bill was to raise the selling value of land by a side wind, so as to allow the worst and wealthier landlords to leave the country on good terms. Mr. Parnell, when opposing the second reading of the Bill (April 21, 1890), declared that the Irish would not accept it, and suggested as an alternative the lowering of rents, compensating the landlords for their loss for a certain number of years, but leaving them after that time to receive the lessened revenue from their property. The ground of opposition on the part of the English Liberals is not so clear. Mr. Gladstone, who spoke with apparent moderation, found not without reason many small objections; but the four great objections which he declared were such as to prevent him from supporting the Bill do not carry conviction. They were in fact political. The first fatal point was the opposition of Ireland, he could not consent to force such a measure upon an unwilling people; he considered that the landlords had such effective means of coercion, that the bargains contemplated could not be voluntary; he pointed out the evils of substituting the State for the landlord, apparently forgetful that his own Bill had contemplated a closely similar process; and he declined to pledge the credit of England without a fresh appeal to the people, believing them to have expressed their opinion against such a step at the last general election. The evil influence exerted by party government upon Irish questions was again exhibited with startling clearness. On a question which from its difficulty and its national character demanded the co-operation of wise men from all sides, the joint opposition succeeded in so hampering the Government that the Bill was withdrawn and relegated to an autumn session, when, as already mentioned, circumstances allowed it to be pushed forward without difficulty.

The Bill was in Committee from April 10, 1891, to the 14th of May. In this stage it met with no undue obstruction, but, on the contrary, as Mr. Balfour gratefully acknowledged, received much assistance from the Irish members. It was finally read a third time on the 15th of June, and carried by a large majority. It passed through the House of Lords without difficulty, and received the royal assent at the end of July.

The effect which the measure would have on the permanent settlement of Ireland was of course as yet a mere matter of speculation;

but there were clear signs that Mr. Balfour's administration, in spite of the uproar it had raised, had been effective. In part no doubt he had received assistance from the Crimes Act relaxed. agricultural distress which had fallen upon the country at the close of 1890, since it gave him the opportunity of showing the real sympathy which lay behind the severity of his action; in part also he had been assisted by the private disputes of the Irish Parliamentary leaders, whose humbler followers in Ireland labouring under a sense of desertion were more disposed to accept conciliatory measures. The result at all events was satisfactory; for Mr. Balfour was able to declare in Parliament (June 5, 1891) that the time had arrived for relaxing the action of the coercive clauses of the Crimes Act, that they might now be safely removed from all Ireland with the exception of one county, and a few outlying baronies.

The second Bill which the break-up of the Opposition allowed Government to push forward was the Tithes Bill. The Tithes Bill. Tithes are always a burning question, and they had lately produced formidable riots in Wales, where Nonconformity is strong. A Bill to secure their more certain collection had been introduced, but withdrawn in 1889. A considerable number of the suggestions made by the Opposition when the former Bill was before Parliament were incorporated in the new Tithe Bill of 1890; nevertheless it was bitterly opposed. Based upon the assumption that the tithes belonged to the Church, it immediately touched the Nonconformists. More indirectly it crossed that tendency towards Socialism, or perhaps more properly Collectivism, which, whether expressed or latent, had for some time been visible among the Radicals. In their view, the tithe was a national property, and could be used for other cognate purposes as well as the maintenance of the Church. But perhaps the most genuine dislike of tithes was felt by those, whether Churchmen or Nonconformists, who had to pay them; and this feeling undoubtedly originated in misapprehension of what the tithes were and what would be the result of abolishing them. The farmers did not see that the tithes were a burden upon land, and that, although the payments were actually made by the tenants, it was the landlords who practically met the charge, and that the landlords alone would benefit if tithes were abolished. The proposed Bill at all events cleared up the question, by making the landlords themselves answerable for the payment of the tithes. But as it recognised that tithes were private property not applicable to general purposes, that the proprietor in the main was the Church of England,

Land Purchase
Bill passed,
July 1891.

and as it gave no relief to the farmer (for the landlord could always take the tithe into consideration when settling the rent), the Bill met with great and varied opposition: so much so that it shared the fate of the Land Purchase Bill, and was only carried forward amid the confusion of the autumn session. There can be little doubt that the well-defined and simple method of collection now proposed, by removing causes of irritation, and by placing the responsibility in surer hands, conferred a benefit both on the Church and on the farmer. The Bill was passed without much opposition in the spring session of 1891.

The success of the Opposition in 1890 had been furthered by the injudicious introduction into the Budget of a clause which brought to bear against the Government the whole weight of the Temperance party. On the introduction of the Budget (April 17, 1890), Mr. Goschen had been able to state that the finances of the country were again in a flourishing condition; he had a surplus of more than £3,000,000. He was therefore able to propose certain remissions, but did not intend to reduce the income-tax. He pointed out that the surplus was almost entirely due to an increase in the consumption of alcohol. He explained that the Government were seriously anxious to diminish this consumption, and he therefore proposed to increase the duties on spirits, and to place the sum thus raised in the hands of local authorities for the purpose of the purchase and extinction of unnecessary licensed houses. The position of the licence-holder had long occupied the attention of temperance reformers; and the more advanced among them held a strong opinion that the licence was, as it purported to be, merely for one year, that the holder had therefore no vested interest in it, and that its renewal might be refused by the licensing authorities at any time without compensation. Although the clauses of the Local Taxation Bill did not actually mention compensation, it was not unreasonable to see in the proposed system of public purchase of licensed houses an indirect method of compensating the holders, and an acknowledgment of the existence of a vested interest in the licence. A very considerable agitation arose upon the subject. Of all the great temperance societies, that of the Church of England alone looked favourably upon the Government proposals. The Opposition took advantage of the agitation among the temperance reformers, and a long and obstinate battle was fought in the House. Obligated as they were to make concessions to the Liberal Unionists, many of whom sympathised on this point with the Opposition, the Government

Opposition of
the Tem-
perance party.

unwillingly yielded step by step, and finally, on the 26th of June, though still maintaining a slight majority on divisions, found it necessary to withdraw their plan. They contented themselves with handing over the money raised by the enhanced duty on spirits to the County Councils without condition but with a strongly worded intimation that they were expected to use it for educational purposes until such time as a definite scheme of technical education was called into existence. The Local Taxation Bill, in which this amendment was embodied, was carried on August 5, 1890.

Spirit duties
to be used for
Technical
Education.

The Government had entered upon office with the declared intention of carrying out social reforms. Their actual achievements with one exception were not large. On the great question pending between capital and labour they had confined themselves to the appointment of a commission of inquiry; while their efforts to improve the position of the agricultural labourer had been limited to a measure giving power to local authorities to negotiate with landowners for the purchase of land to be let in allotments. The occupation of such allotments unquestionably added to the amenities of the life of workmen resident in towns, and was not without result in rendering the position of the agricultural labourer more tolerable. But it fell far short of satisfying the hope largely entertained that means might be found of giving the labourer such an interest in the land as might prevent him from joining the ever-increasing stream of migration to the towns.

Allotment Act,
April 1891.

On one point however a really great step in advance was taken, the opportunity having been afforded by the favourable condition of the finances. On April 23, 1891, Mr. Goschen announced a surplus of £2,000,000, and declared that it might well be applied to the establishment of free education. His declaration had already been foreshadowed in the Queen's speech (January 22, 1891), "Your attention will be invited to the expediency of alleviating the burden which compulsory education has in recent years imposed upon the poorer portions of my people." When once education had been made compulsory it was certain that sooner or later it must be made free; the State had practically undertaken the training of the children of the nation, and to oblige parents to pay for it against their will was neither logical nor in the long run possible. Many Liberals had for years believed that the step now suggested was a necessary one. Nor had this belief been confined to the Opposition; it was shared by Mr.

Free Educa-
tion, July 1891.

Chamberlain and by many members of the Unionist party. The proposal therefore met with general favour. Such opposition as it encountered came chiefly from the Conservatives. There were many, and among them men most deeply interested in the cause of education, who regarded it with apprehension. To lessen the responsibilities of the parent appeared to them a questionable advantage. It seemed to them to be only another step towards that system of State socialism, the rapid advance of which was threatening to undermine the independence of personal character, and to weaken, by reliance on the State, that robust strength which is produced by the necessity for individual effort. To these very reasonable objections was added the fear felt by many Conservatives that an even-handed distribution of State aid to denominational and undenominational schools would be sure to excite opposition, and would eventually lead to the triumph of the Board schools. The feeling in favour of the Bill was however very general; it was carried without difficulty and became law, July 24, 1891. It authorised the payment by the State of 10s. a year for the education of every child between the ages of 5 and 15 who made the required number of attendances at either a Board or Denominational school. The contribution was calculated upon the ordinary fee of about 3*l.* a week. There were however many schools at which the fee was higher; a provision was therefore made to allow the continuance of the excess fee in these schools, deducting the 3*l.* paid by Government.

English primary education is still far from perfect; it is still open to the very serious charge of being directed to no definite and well-understood end, and of wanting that elasticity which is requisite to secure its application to varying circumstances of time and place. But it was undoubtedly a great step forward when a hardship was removed which was felt by a very large class of people, and which furnished an argument of real cogency to those who either from carelessness or ignorance of its value objected to the compulsory education of children. Theoretically the Bill marks the acceptance in the fullest sense by the State of the responsibility of training its future citizens in the first rudiments of culture.

The Parliament was approaching its termination, it was practically certain that a dissolution would be necessary before the autumn of 1892. Already therefore the rival parties were making preparation for a general election, and whatever assertions were made, or measures introduced, must be regarded from that point of view. The most definite compendium of

Preparations
for general
election, Sept.
1891.

the policy of the Liberals is to be found in the Resolutions of the National Liberal Federation which assembled at Newcastle in September 1891. At the head of the list, as was inevitable considering the views of the party leader, stood Home Rule. Beyond this, after the payment of Members and the creation of Parish Councils, the greatest stress was laid upon the disestablishment of the Welsh Church. Mr. Gladstone's support of such a measure exposed him to considerable obloquy and to the charge of sacrificing principle to the exigencies of party. Yet it was in strict accordance with the general trend of his policy that Wales should be regarded as a separate nationality, and with his previous utterances as to the Scotch Church, that the voice of the large majority of its representatives in favour of disestablishment should demand consideration. At the same time it cannot be questioned that the promise of such a step as even partial Church Disestablishment held out a strong inducement to the Nonconformists to support the Liberal party.

But perhaps the more significant part of the programme was the attention given to the claims of the agricultural labourers. From the time of their complete enfranchisement, their weight in party politics had been well understood. On the first occasion on which they had used their vote the result had been by no means in accordance with the general expectation. Both parties now felt the necessity of securing the Agricultural vote in the County elections. The result was a somewhat undignified competition, in which Conservative and Liberal attempted to outbid each other in their promises. It was thought advisable by the Liberals to hold a Conference of villagers in London. It was held on the 10th of December, and was honestly representative. Some 400 delegates attended. Naturally enough the views of such a meeting had little to do with imperial questions. The chief complaints were the usurped authority of the clergy, the quantity of land which was kept out of cultivation for the sake of sport or pleasure, and the high rents at which allotments were let. The chief demands were the establishment of Parish Councils which should have control of the land, the schools and the charities, as well as some other less important items such as rights of way, which had already been suggested as within their competence; and that the members of the Councils to whom these powers were given should be elected by ballot on the "one man one vote" system. They made it clearly understood that their business was quite as important as Home Rule, and should not be postponed for it. To complete the operation, Mr. Gladstone

Liberal meet-
ing of agri-
culturists.

met the delegates at a breakfast at the Holborn Restaurant. He there expressed a general approval of their propositions, but coupled it with a firm protest against their complaints of the squire and the parson. He further suggested that the Parish Council should lease rather than buy land; their rents, the duration of their tenure, and their general independence would thus be more completely in their own hands, while the difficulty of raising the money requisite for purchase would be removed.

The Conservatives thought it necessary to follow this example, and summoned a meeting of rural representatives, chiefly from the eastern counties, to be held at Ely, in January 1892. The complaints at the meeting were much of the same character, but the necessity of old age pensions was brought more prominently forward. To Mr. Chaplin, the Minister of Agriculture, fell the duty of explaining the intentions of the Government. He mentioned as points likely to be considered, the increase of small holdings, the improvement of cottages, and the establishment of District rather than Parish Councils. Allotments could, he thought, always be obtained by voluntary agreement, and as the land given was good and convenient, they must expect to pay high rent for it. With regard to old age pensions he said that any scheme adopted must be such as would not injure the great benefit societies. But the real point of his speech was strictly political. Both parties being desirous in their own ways of improving the labourer's position, which, he asked, was the most likely to fulfil their promises, the Conservatives who had always shown interest in the agricultural poor, or the Liberals who were determined to postpone all English legislation until the impossible question of Ireland was settled?

The session of 1892 opened under somewhat new circumstances. The death of the Duke of Devonshire had raised his son Lord Hartington to the peerage and deprived his party in the Lower House of his weighty and sensible leadership. The Liberal Unionists found in Mr. Chamberlain a leader of a wholly different complexion. Vehement and aggressive in speech, Radical in many of his views, and of a very practical mind, Mr. Chamberlain was gifted with that faith in himself, and that determination to bring to a realisation the object he had in view which together constitute a first-rate party man. On the other hand he was not, like his predecessor, secure of his position, he had to make it for himself. A certain quiet dignity therefore which had marked Lord Hartington, was in his case wanting; and there was always a

Conservative
meeting of
agri-
culturists.

Changes in the
House, Jan.
1892.

probability that if he found his objects fairly advanced by the Conservative Government he might shrink from a lengthened exclusion from office, and find means to join his former opponents. Meanwhile, the influence of the party under his guidance continued to be very marked. The leadership of the House had also passed into different hands, Mr. W. H. Smith, the incarnation of solid good sense, had died in the autumn of 1891, and with general approbation one of the youngest members of the Cabinet, Mr. Arthur Balfour, had resigned the Irish Secretaryship where his work had been so striking, and had accepted the position of First Lord of the Treasury with the management of the House.

Although thus removed from the Irish administration, where his place was taken by Mr. Jackson (February 18, 1892), Mr. Balfour thought it right himself to introduce the Bill for Irish Local Government which was to represent the Unionist view of what Home Rule might mean, and to fulfil that promise of similar treatment of England and Ireland, which ever since 1886 had been waiting its fulfilment. Introduced with a somewhat strange show of carelessness and want of interest, the Bill contained provisions which the Irish Party could scarcely fail to regard as insulting. It showed throughout a profound disbelief in the honesty of the people to whom it intrusted power. It proposed to create County Councils, with certain administrative duties, and also Baronial Councils, answering to what were known in England as District Councils. But the gift which seemed so generous was fenced about by restrictions which deprived it of all its value. All judicial duties were still to be left in the hands of the grand juries. The police was left as before. Even the limited duties intrusted to the County Councils were guarded by strict conditions. Not only were the County Councils themselves hampered by the presence of four nominee members, but all expenditure on roads or new offices or similar matters was to be subject in every county to the approbation of a joint committee of fifteen members, only seven of whom were to be nominated by the County Council. The presence of the Sheriff as an *ex-officio* member and of seven members nominated by the grand jury secured a majority to the representatives of the Administration. Nor was this all. By a clause which excited great anger, twenty ratepayers might petition the judges to remove any County or Baronial Council on the ground of oppression or corruption. Any two judges might try the case, and if they found the Council guilty might remove it, its powers being then transferred

Irish Local
Government
Bill.

to the Lord Lieutenant. Such restrictions might have been necessary; but if so, it seemed hardly judicious to establish Local Government at all, or to place any power in the hands of men so evidently mistrusted. There can be little doubt that Mr. Balfour had no faith in his own scheme. He declared in fact that he regarded it as of much less importance than the Criminal Law Procedure Act, or the Railway Act, or the Congested Districts Act, or the Land Purchase Act. It is indeed known that it was introduced to satisfy the demands of the Liberal Unionists. It was also no doubt desirable, in view of the coming elections, that the Ministerial candidates should be able to assert that the Government promises had been fulfilled. It was found impossible, perhaps it was never intended, to pass the Bill during the session. At the same time it was, as Mr. Gladstone said, and as Mr. Balfour admitted, of great use in clearing the air, and showing how far the Government was inclined to go.

Mr. Chaplin was more successful in his promised Bill in favour of **Small Holdings Bill.** small holdings. Its intention was primarily to keep the people on the land. It empowered County Councils to borrow a sum not involving a charge of more than a penny per pound upon the rates, for the purpose of buying land for small holdings of from one to fifty acres. Objection was made to the want of compulsory powers of purchase, but the Bill passed and became law (June 21, 1892).

With the exception of a few other Bills of no great importance, nothing else was completed. The business of the House was rapidly wound up, and in June the necessary dissolution took place.

The issue on which the battle of the elections was to be fought was, except in the one great point, somewhat confused. **Questions at issue at the elections.** Mr. Balfour's want of interest in his own Irish Local Government Bill, and the list of measures which he declared to be of more importance, indicate the different temper in which the two parties approached the questions of the time. Apart from a certain amount of personal and class prejudice it would be foolish to doubt the genuine interest felt by both in the improvement of the condition of Ireland and of the English working classes. But while the Liberals sought the cure largely in the concession of political rights, the Conservatives sought it in the immediate practical correction of recognised evils. It is usual to speak of the Liberals as being unduly moved by sentiment, and as mischievously eager to call into action legislative intervention. The charge can scarcely be substantiated, or must at least be shared by their opponents. There

is no doubt that Mr. Gladstone was on one point strongly moved by sentiment; intense sympathy with national aspirations, and an overwhelming belief that the first duty of England was to cure, as it had caused, the woes of Ireland, had become the single motive power of his political action. But in other respects, both sentiment and a readiness to accept legislative interference seem to have been fairly distributed in the two parties. The desire for imperial self-assertion and the pity for the sufferings of the poor which prevailed among the Conservatives were as truly sentiments as any which actuated the Liberals. There was no lack of sentimental horror among the Conservatives when what they considered as the greatness of the country or that prestige which they loved so dearly was touched; the mere unfounded suggestion that the Liberals were inclined to bring the occupation of Egypt to an end seemed likely to ruin the prospects of the Opposition. Nor was there any lack of readiness to sanction legislative action in favour of the well-being of the working-man; indeed, the principle of State socialism was even more obvious in the Unionist ranks than in those of the Opposition. On the other hand, the Liberals were upon certain points not only free from sentiment but were commonly charged with being "doctrinaire." It was from their ranks that the firmest protest issued against tampering even in the slightest degree with the policy of free-trade; they denounced, resting their denunciations upon the theoretical doctrines of political economy, all ideas of reciprocity or of preferential duties for the sake of colonial interests; and it was they who attempted to prove the nugatory character of any scheme of old age pension.

It is interesting to observe Lord Salisbury's attitude with regard to these two questions which were prominently before the public. He apparently had some sympathy for the **Lord Salisbury's views.** mistrust of free-trade so generally felt among his followers. He certainly gave utterance to words which seemed to imply the possibility at all events of some measure of a slightly protective character. One of his arguments in favour of the increase of British dominions was found in the possible necessity of finding in home markets the chief extension of commerce, and when pointing out the refusal of all nations except England to accept free-trade, he certainly used words which could be and were largely interpreted as a hint that reciprocity might be necessary. But Lord Salisbury, who believed apparently in the inevitable character of development, and therefore preferred to follow rather than attempt to mould the tendencies of the time, was at all events firm on the other question. Intervention

between employer and employed he constantly denounced; and while favouring any arrangements which could improve the physical condition of the poor, he set his face constantly against the belief that the poor man would find any real advantage in adventitious assistance, declaring that his hope must rest on his own character and his own thrift.

Thus, when the General Election came on in July, except on one great point the line dividing the parties was not very easy of definition. The difference lay rather in the temper and spirit in which questions were approached than in the questions themselves, more in the personal confidence inspired by the leaders than in the actual measures they promised to produce. There can be no question as to the real desire of all parties to ameliorate the condition of the poor. But real trust in the working-man and the belief that if privileges were given him he would use them well, which were largely felt by the more advanced Liberals, found but little place in the Conservative ranks. With them the ideas of wealth and of influence were inseparable. It was charitable sentiment rather than a sense of justice which urged them to social reforms. Political questions were treated in the same temper. The assertion of the rights and privileges of the upper and propertied classes, and the importance of giving due weight to wealth, are everywhere visible. If, as was now inevitable, democratic forms were necessary, it was the propertied District Council and not the working-men in their Parish Council who should be charged with local duties. If again Lord Salisbury and his friends were strongly opposed to the principle involved in the formula "one man one vote," it was because it entailed a loss of the influence due to the possession of property in several different constituencies. In the same way with regard to the House of Lords; as the representatives of property, in Conservative eyes the peers possessed and ought to possess large constitutional power. It had been declared, and Lord Salisbury had accepted the declaration, that although it was neither possible nor right for the House of Lords to refuse to listen to the clearly expressed desire of the nation, it was its right and its duty to insist upon such a definite issue being placed before the nation. The expressed will of the nation was no doubt too strong to be resisted; but it must be a definitely expressed wish embodied in a detailed Bill; a vague mandate interpreted by a Ministry could have no such coercive weight. Thus in the present instance, if Mr. Gladstone declined to give the details of his proposed Home Rule Bill and came into power and then produced them, it was the duty of the Lords to throw it out and to force a dissolution, so that

Dividing line
of parties.

not the principle merely but the definite Bill should be before the constituencies. Roughly, on the one side was ranged property and orthodoxy, on the other democracy and nonconformity.

The one overwhelming question to be settled was still the Irish question. Beyond that there were Welsh disestablishment, and social questions regarded from the different points of view which have been roughly indicated. Judging by the bye-elections there had already been a distinct turn in the tide. Mr. Gladstone had openly avowed his inability at his age to undertake more than the one great reform on which he was bent. But apart from Ireland, the people were returning to their allegiance to the Liberal party. The belief that more was to be gained in the way of reform and improvement from a Liberal than from a Conservative Government was reasserting itself. To this is to be added the inevitable reaction which seems to govern the ebb and flow of parties, the desire to try what men now excluded from office for six years would do, and the inevitable disappointment which waits on any long-lived Government from its failure to satisfy the hopes under which it had gained its majority. Political gratitude is one of the weakest of motives; it was in vain to speak of the Local Government Act or of Free Education, while still further advances seemed obtainable from a change of Ministry. Yet the result of the whole election was not so great as had been expected. Mr. Gladstone had always said that to handle the Irish question properly the Government which undertook the work must have a working majority exclusive of the Irish. He had hoped from the signs given at bye-elections that such would now be the case. When the result of the elections became known, and the Liberal majority was found to be no more than 40 including the 81 Irish Nationalists it was plain that the desired condition had not been reached, and that a large and free handling of the Irish question would be impossible. As the Opposition commanded a clear majority if the Gladstonians and Irish voted together, it became a question whether Lord Salisbury should at once resign, or should again meet Parliament as Prime Minister. He preferred the latter course, and in so doing was certainly justified by the state of parties. The change of opinion in England, as shown in the late elections, was not sufficient to render his resignation necessary.

The speech from the throne with which, on the 8th of August, the session was opened was of the briefest character. The Liberal Lords were thus unexpectedly in a position to avoid discussion, and refrained

Signs of
Liberal
reaction.

General
election, July
1892.

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from moving any amendment on the Address. But though the Address was adopted in the Upper House without a division, both Lord Salisbury and the Duke of Devonshire took the opportunity of expressing in strong words their view of the crisis, and called upon the House to resist with all their strength any attempt that might be made to deprive the Peers of their constitutional right of an equal voice in legislation, for now, if ever, it was upon them that the future of the country depended.

It was of course in the House of Commons that the fate of the Ministry had to be decided. Their retention of power, after the verdict of the late election, was vindicated by the argument that if the Irish party, whose opinion was a matter of certainty, was left out of sight, the mandate given to the Unionist Government in 1886 to oppose Home Rule had not been withdrawn by the constituencies, and that they could not yield to anything less than a hostile vote of the House. Such a vote was not long delayed; Mr. Asquith almost immediately moved a vote of want of confidence. In speaking in support of it, the leaders of both branches of the Irish party emphasised their position as holding the balance in the House. They stated the demands of Ireland, and declared that unless the Home Rule Bill answered those demands they would assuredly vote against it. Mr. Gladstone was not however to be induced to give any detailed declaration of policy. He declared that the attempt to analyse the majority, and to speak of the Irish majority as if it were different from the majority of the United Kingdom, was a gross breach of the true spirit of national union. He stigmatised the Coercion Act as "an effort, not to punish crime, but to secure the collection of rent." He admitted that some good measures had been passed, but complained that others far more important introduced by the Opposition had been rejected. These rejected Bills might be taken as the programme of the Liberals. They included "the appointment of District Councils and Parish Councils, the placing of the police and the licensing under the County Councils, the adoption of local option, the application of the principle of religious equality to Scotland and Wales, the shortening of Parliaments, the payment of members, the amendment of registration, the establishment of what is called 'one man one vote,' the equalisation of the death duties, and many more such proposals." Turning to Irish affairs, he declared with much solemnity, "The question of Ireland is to me personally almost everything. It is almost, if not altogether, my sole link with public

Opening of
Parliament,
Aug. 8.

Vote of Want
of Confidence.

life. It has been my primary and absorbing interest for the last six or seven years, and so it will continue till the end."

The division (August 11, 1892) was of course on strict party lines; the Government were defeated by a majority of 40, and at once resigned.

Resignation of
the Ministry.

The retiring Government had been fortunate in possessing in Lord Salisbury a Foreign Minister of unusual ability. Although from time to time voices of disapproval had been raised by the Opposition, his foreign policy had throughout his tenure of office met with general commendation. That the Premier should undertake the onerous duties of the Foreign Office was unusual; but though the arrangement had been much criticised, it had proved a good one; for the circumstances of Europe were such as to require the surrender of old party traditions; and although there were no superlatively great and critical questions at issue, there were several complicated matters needing tactful handling and necessitating concessions, and an amount of give and take which no authority less than that of the Premier could have rendered palatable to his followers. The idea of imperialism had taken considerable hold upon the public mind. It was as yet very undefined, and ranging from the aggressive self-assertion which is stigmatised as *Jingoism*, up to the wise appreciation of the national responsibility towards the outlying portions of the empire. The unity of the empire had no doubt been much emphasised in the Home Rule discussions, but the recognition of its importance was by no means a monopoly of the Unionists. If the imperial position of Great Britain had again and again been emphasised by Mr. Chamberlain, the other side of the question, the mutual responsibility of Great Britain and its colonies, had found an eloquent exponent in Lord Rosebery. He had pointed out the change which was taking place under the influence of wide colonisation, and the probability that future causes of war would be found rather in the disputes of distant colonies than in Europe. From this he drew the conclusion that while it was just to demand from the colonies assistance for imperial defence, it followed as a necessary consequence that they should have some voice in the foreign policy of the empire. It was indeed obviously just that the colonies, endowed as they were with a system of the widest self-government, should assist in their own defence. The principle had been already accepted, and they had contributed towards the expense of works necessary to render their coasts and harbours secure. It could hardly be expected that they would

Foreign policy
of the retiring
Ministry.

continue their assistance without receiving some share in the government. There was a strong feeling that the loosely joined limbs of the empire must be linked more closely to the centre of political life.

From his first accession to office, Lord Salisbury had made it evident that he had no intention of upholding that self-asserting form of imperialism which Lord Beaconsfield had been inclined to favour. His positive mind saved him from the dangers of imaginative statesmanship, his deep-seated love of peace made him press diplomatic methods to their furthest extreme in order to avoid war. It has been mentioned that in the matter of the Afghan boundary and in the Eastern question he had frankly adopted the views of his predecessors, even though modifications of the Berlin Treaty were at stake. He allowed the formation of a united Bulgaria, and upheld the influence of the concert of Europe, the creation of which had been the great work of Lord Granville. His action indeed was such as to merit and obtain the full approbation of the Opposition. But there was a concert of Europe of a different sort and for a different object, to which the relation of England had to be considered. The great war of 1871 had left France and Germany in a state of scarcely suppressed antagonism. To secure his country from the revenge of the French, and to maintain the general peace of Europe, Bismarck had used all his ability to isolate France, and to combine Europe directly or indirectly in a great league against it. He had been largely successful. A triple alliance had been formed between Germany, Austria, and Italy. Russia had been secured by a secret treaty of neutrality, and an arrangement between Italy and England, in 1887, for securing the *status quo* in the Mediterranean had gone far to complete the isolation of France. Conditions such as these tended no doubt to the maintenance of European peace, but did not conduce to calm the passions of the country on which they were forced. The re-establishment of their influence became a fixed idea among the French.

As a further assurance of peace, the nations of Europe were adopting the somewhat strange measure of maintaining gigantic armaments. The received principle of the time was that peace was best maintained by preparation for war. Avowedly in fact there was the deepest mistrust among the various countries, and each thought it necessary to be in a condition to repel with certainty a possible invasion. Even in England the doctrine found acceptance, and though its insular position rendered such vast

Lord Salisbury
as Foreign
Minister.

European
Armaments.

armies as were kept up abroad unnecessary to it, its corresponding weapon of defence, the fleet, demanded a similar enormous increase.

In the year 1888 attention had been drawn to the condition of the navy, especially by Lord Charles Beresford and Mr. Brassey, while Lord Wolseley had subjected the condition of the army to a searching and bitter criticism. At the time, with that optimism which is inherent in Governments, all was declared admirable, and Lord Wolseley had to submit to a severe reprimand from Lord Salisbury; but a year's meditation seemed to bring home to the Government the truth of the charges made. For when the estimates for the army and navy were produced in March 1889, they were accompanied with an elaborate plan for an increase to the navy of no less than 70 ships, at a cost of £21,000,000. Of this, £10,000,000 was to be paid by instalments spread over four years, and the remainder was to make its appearance in a yearly increase of the estimates. There was naturally some opposition to so large an expenditure, and much technical criticism of the sort of ships the Government proposed to build. It was urged that so lengthened a programme was likely to stereotype inferior forms of vessel which changing circumstances might render useless. And, before all, there was a strong expression of dislike to placing out of the immediate control of Parliament so large a sum for a considerable number of years. But the feeling, both of the House and of the nation, was quite decided that whatever was necessary for the security of the nation must be done without further delay, and the naval estimates were passed by a large majority. With respect to the army, the case was rather different; the Government still held to the view that the real defence of the empire was to be found in the fleet. The army estimates were therefore conceived in a narrower spirit. The explanations of Mr. Stanhope as to the sufficiency of the existing army for purposes of defence were regarded as satisfactory, and, though not without a certain amount of criticism, the estimates were allowed to pass.

Though England thus in some degree followed the example of continental nations, and had even in 1887 contracted some form of understanding with Italy, the general and traditional policy of the Government was to stand aloof from European quarrels, with a reasonable certainty of finding allies should any grave difficulty occur. This policy of isolation appeared to the continental Powers mere selfishness. It produced a very general feeling of dislike to England, and threw upon the Foreign Office the delicate duty of maintaining friendly relations with countries mutually

Increase of the
navy.

Policy of
isolation.

hostile. Under these circumstances disputes, not in themselves of great importance, might easily have produced serious consequences if badly handled. And such disputes were plentiful, more especially with France. The continuation year by year of the occupation of Egypt, which had been originally entered upon with a solemn assertion that it was but a temporary measure, excited much jealousy and mistrust, and it was impossible for France to avoid feeling sore at the loss of an influence it had once so largely shared. That the occupation was practically necessary, and certainly highly advantageous to the people, failed to change the opinion of those who saw in it only covert aggression. Thus it was with France, eager to regain its old position in Europe and to break through the restraints which Bismarck's diplomacy had laid upon it, that the first serious difficulty arose.

There was a quarrel of very long standing connected with the Newfoundland fisheries. According to the English contention, the question rested upon the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. By that treaty the rights of fishing upon the Newfoundland coast had been secured to the French, together with the right of drying fish upon the land, and of erecting for that purpose, and for that purpose only, stages and wooden huts. Permanent buildings and permanent occupation were distinctly forbidden. The matter had been mentioned in more than one subsequent treaty, and the portion of coast thrown open had been changed, but at no time did it appear that the original limitations had been withdrawn. The French however read into the treaties a meaning much more advantageous to themselves. They construed them as granting them the sovereignty of the coast over which their fishing rights extended. They had excluded British fishermen, had built permanent factories for the purpose of lobster-canning, had set at defiance the colonial authorities, and, according to the assertion of the Newfoundlanders, had rendered impossible all development over nearly half the island. The difficulty was aggravated by the very decided views of the colonial Government, and by its urgent appeals to the mother country to defend its rights. Great discontent was felt and shown at the slow and careful methods of the Foreign Office; and the *modus vivendi* by which, during the settlement of the question, the fishermen of the two nations were to enjoy joint rights, received anything but a favourable reception. It was even openly asserted that the arbitration suggested by the Home Government would not be accepted or its awards be obeyed. A deputation of the Newfoundland Ministry came over to England to urge the colonial cause. There was some talk

of separation, and an attempt to find in the American Republic the support refused by England. The quarrel became highly critical; a false step on the part of the naval officers of either nation might have brought on a serious quarrel and even war. The English Ministry, under these circumstances, made use of the imperial position of England in a manner which was certainly the very opposite of what is generally meant by "imperialism." They entirely overruled the colonial view, admitted most of the claims of France, and in 1891 brought in a Bill by which naval officers were authorised to secure even by force the carrying out of treaties. It was not however found necessary to press this Bill to a conclusion. The Government stated that an agreement had been arrived at, by which, after the second reading, time should be allowed for negotiation with the colonial Legislature, and the Bill be dropped if the *modus vivendi*, the arbitration award, and the maintenance of the existing treaties were accepted for three years, so as to give time for a final settlement to be reached. The Bill was not even read a second time; but the House declared its willingness to support the Government in carrying out the treaties and in going to arbitration.

But the greatest difficulties with which the Foreign Office had to contend were those arising from the almost sudden rise throughout Europe of a desire for colonising the African continent. Until 1876 the only European country exercising any considerable influence in Africa was England. The great discoveries on that continent had been made by Englishmen, in many places the British flag had been raised, British missionary enterprise had begun the work of civilisation and formed settlements far in the interior, and British influence was practically unquestioned. But it is difficult, perhaps impossible, for the Government to go much beyond the wishes of the nation at large. Long-sighted views of political or mercantile possibilities, unless shared by the people, are out of the reach of Government. The mercantile world was not at the time ready to take advantage of the opportunities made known by the reports of travellers. There seemed no particular reason why things should not continue in their present position. The openings thus neglected were utilised by other nations. A mania for colonial expansion, for the acquisition of extended territory, arose in all the great European countries. The English, suddenly awakened from their indifference, now threw themselves eagerly into the general scramble for the possession of the newly discovered country; and they at once found themselves face to face with Portugal, Germany, France, and Italy.

Now that the fit of apathy had passed away, and the complacent acquiescence in things as they were was rudely shocked, it must have been difficult for the Conservative leaders to keep aloof from the grasping temper of their followers. There are always men who consider the greatness of an empire to depend upon its size, who see in the acquisitions of their neighbours assaults upon themselves, and who are ready to raise the cry of injured national prestige at any concession or recognition of the rights of others. With such men

Lord
Salisbury's
attitude.

Lord Salisbury's policy was not in favour; the Press was full of their outcries. Lord Salisbury, though bitter in speech, was of a singularly peaceful disposition. Believing strongly in the right and duty of European nations to assist in the advance of civilisation, the somewhat questionable view that vast tracts of territory, if inhabited by men of a different colour, may be legitimately seized to allow of the expansion of the white races, was not repugnant to him. But he always, under all circumstances and in every continent, recognised the necessary give and take of that diplomacy which is the civilised substitute for war. No doubt he was fully conscious that, in times past, both he and his rivals in office had neglected opportunities of which the loss was now to be regretted. But he approached the present complications with an acknowledgment that other nations had fairly occupied the places which England had carelessly left vacant. He limited himself to securing what could be honestly spoken of as "British interests;" that is to say, such territories as were actually in some degree occupied by the British, or which appeared to be necessary for the expansion of such rudimentary settlements.

The difficulties with Portugal assumed the shape of a question as to the definition of the limits of ancient rights. The outburst of Portuguese energy in discovery and colonisation which marked the fifteenth century is a strange episode in history. A comparatively few years saw it fade away, and its results were left to be reaped by nations of a more persistent character. But what had been at that time effected in the southern part of Africa was now made the groundwork of astonishing pretensions. The whole breadth of the continent, from Mozambique and Lorenzo Marques on the east to St. Paul de Loando on the west, was claimed as belonging to Portugal by right of discovery. So vast a claim could not of course be admitted for a moment; facts too obviously contradicted it. There was no difficulty in showing that, whatever might have been done in the fifteenth century, the Portuguese had long since retired from the

Dispute with
Portugal.

interior, where their very name was unknown; that the ruins which they claimed as evidence of early occupation were of very different origin; and that from dread of native hostility the Portuguese practically confined themselves to a few ill-kept and unhealthy settlements upon the coast. At these places, such trade as there was in the hands of traders from British India; and such fictitious establishments as still existed a few miles up the Zambesi consisted at most of a powerless Portuguese official with perhaps a sergeant, to represent armed occupation. The expansion of Great Britain in Africa had assumed a form convenient no doubt at the time, as saving the Government from direct responsibility; but, as history seemed to prove, it was a form of questionable advantage in the long run. The greater part of the duties of government had been given into the hands of large chartered companies. Already there were two such companies attempting to develop the countries to the south of Lake Nyassa; and an important settlement of Scotch missionaries was spreading civilisation with marked success from their station at Blantyre in the highlands of the river Shiré, the chief northern tributary of the Zambesi. A third great company was coming into existence for the purpose of opening up the country immediately to the north of the Transvaal.

To have listened to Portugal would have been to check all these efforts. Lord Salisbury adopted a very firm attitude. When the Portuguese sent expeditions to try to make good their claims and to form treaties with the native tribes, he despatched an ultimatum to the Court of Lisbon which in spite of angry demonstrations on the part of the populace could not be resisted. A line of demarcation was drawn, securing all that could reasonably be wished for, including the free navigation of the Zambesi and the Shiré, and practically pushing British influence as far as the south of Lake Tanganyika. The Treaty was laid before the House of Lords in June 1891. Lord Salisbury explained that the general principle consisted in the acknowledgment of treaty rights and of effective occupation, and that the result, on the whole, was a division which placed in our hands the territories suited for white occupation, leaving to Portugal those which could be developed only by the natives in accordance with Portuguese habits. There was not much difficulty in dealing with a Power so effete, or with claims so preposterous as those of Portugal; the case was different when the rival Power was Germany.

The dispute with Germany concerned territories which had been, and still were nominally, the possessions of the Sultan of Zanzibar. The desire for colonisation and for

Settlement
with Portugal,
June 1891.

Dispute with
Germany.

mercantile openings outside Europe had been strongly felt in Germany, and a society to foster colonisation had been formed which in 1884 sent out commissioners, Dr. Peters and Count Pfeil, to the east coast of Africa opposite Zanzibar. When these explorers returned in the following year, it appeared that with entire disregard of the authority of the Sultan they had contracted separate alliances with various native chiefs. For many years at Zanzibar the English Consul, Sir John Kirk, had been practically all powerful. Under him British influence had become supreme, and Zanzibar seemed to be rapidly developing into an orderly and well-governed State. The news that behind and even within the limits of the Sultan's dominions the Germans were establishing a new power, gave a considerable shock to English feelings. In March 1885 a charter had been granted to a German colonisation company, giving it an imperial protectorate over territories stretching from Zanzibar to Lake Tanganyika. Prince Bismarck, bent upon realising his great schemes of military organisation, although he was not himself in favour of colonial expansion, could not afford to disregard the movement, and the eager colonial party had received his support. In the opinion of the more vehement partisans of British expansion, the Foreign Office had yielded unduly to German pressure. In 1886 a line of demarcation, running from the river Wanga, north of Zanzibar, including the mountainous district of Kilimanjaro, and terminating on the shores of Lake Victoria, was agreed upon to separate the rival "spheres of influence"; and at the same time the work of Sir John Kirk was entirely destroyed by the acknowledgment of a German protectorate over Zanzibar itself. The administration of the English "sphere of influence," which lay to the north of this line and included the newly discovered kingdom of Uganda, was, in accordance with late precedents, intrusted to an East African company, at the head of which was Sir William Mackinnon. The two companies thus placed in close juxtaposition differed widely in their methods of procedure with the natives; constant disputes arose between them, and the friction became very severe. Again, to the west of Lake Victoria, up to the confines of the Congo State, which had been established by the Belgian King at the instigation of Stanley the traveller, there was a large district not distinctly included either in the German or the English "sphere of influence." The aspirations of the British mercantile companies were high, and the idea had arisen of a continuous line of British trade settlements, or at least an extension of British influence from Cape Colony to Egypt. The great lakes afforded an almost continuous waterway, and the

possession of this trade road was regarded as of the first importance. The eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika and the territory between it and Lake Victoria were included in the German "sphere." Conduct not of the most scrupulous character had enabled Dr. Peters to form private treaties with chiefs in this neighbourhood and to the west of Lake Victoria. There seemed to be a risk not only of a formidable break in the great mercantile road, but of the lapping of German influence around and behind the Uganda kingdom.

Lord Salisbury was compelled to take the matter in hand. He treated it on his usual principles. He did not attempt to claim for England more than was due, considering the increase of the French power in Madagascar, the position of the Germans, and the labour and capital already spent in Africa. Under his management a Convention was arrived at in June 1890. The German Government was induced to disregard the private arrangements Dr. Peters had made with the natives, and to treat the whole matter as an international one. The surrender to Germany of the little island of Heligoland procured the restoration of the Protectorate of Zanzibar to England, and the encroaching temper of the Germans in Africa was set at rest by the demarcation of the limits of the rival spheres of influence in the disputed district. The line was drawn straight from a point on the west coast of Lake Victoria opposite to the termination of the old line from the coast to the lake until it reached the border of the Congo State. It was thought by many that this Convention favoured the Germans unduly. The uproar against it among the eager advocates of African expansion was violent. In their view the strict principle of "the hinterland" ought to have been applied; the German sphere should have been confined to the land immediately behind their coast-line, and the line dividing the English and German spheres of influence should have been drawn far to the south of the great lake. Stanley was indignant at "the pusillanimous surrender of forests and kingdoms." But, as Lord Salisbury said, "bargains must be regarded from the point of view of prudence as well as of boldness; and though we ruled the sea, and need fear no question of maritime rivalry, an entirely different set of considerations came into view when the question was one of taking possession of territories only accessible after three months' travel." When the treaty was completed, and it appeared that the right of continuing the trade road across the German territory had been secured, most reasonable men, and Stanley among them, were on the whole well satisfied.

Settlement
with Germany.
June 1890.

In this policy of prudent bargain and constant concession there was little of the temper of acquisitive imperialism. Nor did the unusual exertion of authority over a self-governing colony, in the case of Canada, and the shock given to its loyalty by the firm refusal of its claims, appear to be much in harmony with that more temperate form of imperialism which looks to closer union or even federation with the colonies. The justification for the unaggressive treatment of international and colonial questions may presumably be found in the general condition of European politics at the time. Direct alliances being out of the question, it became a necessity for English statesmanship to draw, as far as possible with an equal hand, support from either of the great continental groups. After all, the chief interest of England lay in Egypt. Promises forbade the assumption of a protectorate over that country, which forms the link not only with our Eastern empire, but with the largest and most important of our colonies. If England was ultimately to retire, time was wanted to complete the great work of re-establishment which had been taken in hand, and to confirm British influence. The only direct competitor for that influence was France. But the other great Powers did not regard the firm establishment of British supremacy with any favour; it wanted but little to induce Germany to throw its weight into the scale. Both France and Germany had therefore to be conciliated. The price paid was perhaps somewhat high; the acceptance of the French protectorate over Madagascar, and the support of French claims in Newfoundland, were matched by the great concessions to Germany in Africa, and the surrender of Heligoland.

The extension of British territory however still went on. For some years the relations between the Indian Government and Thebaw, King of Upper Burmah, had been severely strained. As early as 1879 our Resident had been withdrawn from the capital, and attempts to renew commercial treaties with the King had proved abortive. French agents had gained his ear. He had attempted to form European relations, and had contracted a Convention of some sort with France. The difficulty reached a climax when he was induced to confiscate the rights of the Burmah Trading Company in favour of French concessionaires. In the autumn of 1885 it was found necessary to address an ultimatum to him, demanding arbitration and the reception of a British Resident. He refused, and pretended that his arrangements with France, Italy, and Germany required that he should consult those countries. On this, General

**Influence of
European
politics.**

Prendergast at once crossed the frontier, and after a short war occupied Mandalay, on November 28, 1885. The country thus conquered was in the following year annexed to the British empire. It was not without difficulty that the Government was established. A guerilla warfare was carried on by the inhabitants which lasted for several years. It was usual to speak of our enemies there as Dacoits, but there is no reason for thinking that they were other than patriotic people fighting for the independence of their country. The pacification of all the annexed districts was ultimately effected in 1889, and British Burmah administered like the rest of British India.

With the exception of the annexation of Upper Burmah, the history of India during Lord Salisbury's administration had been somewhat uneventful. The great ability of Lord Dufferin enabled him to pursue with success the policy begun by the delimitation of the boundaries of Afghanistan in 1884. The policy consisted in establishing an independent State between the Russian empire and the British dominions, and in preserving friendly relations with its ruler, so long as he was able to maintain himself on the throne, and to keep in order the wild tribes of which his kingdom chiefly consisted. Abdurahman proved to be a man of unusual vigour; and though now and then difficulties arose, they were overcome by the tact of the Viceroy and the wisdom of the Ameer in recognising in which direction his own interests lay. Within the frontier which had now been definitely adopted, great efforts were made to secure the defence of India. Various communications were opened, and a railway was constructed at considerable expense from the valley of the Indus to Quetta. In Baluchistan the influence of Sir Robert Sandeman secured the friendship of the chiefs. Each little war was made of use as an opportunity of surveying and mapping the difficult mountain barrier. Lord Dufferin also set on foot a system, which was completed by his successor, Lord Lansdowne, by which the irregular armies of the protected princes were reformed and reorganised. A feeling of loyalty to the British empire was so successfully encouraged that portions of these reorganised armies were regarded, and could indeed be used, as imperial troops. The presence of a considerable number of Indian princes at the Jubilee had given a signal proof of their acceptance of British rule.

But side by side with this apparent loyalty there had arisen a movement among the middle classes which threatened at one time to be somewhat dangerous. A so-called National Congress assembled at Calcutta in 1887, and continued to meet

**Management of
Indian affairs.**

**Indian National
Congress.**

yearly, the number of delegates rising from 350 at the first meeting to nearly 2000 in 1889. The language of the orators was not always decorous, and claims were put forward for the introduction of popular and parliamentary government in India, a demand which the state of the country, and the position of the English there, rendered it impossible to grant. Expressions of disapprobation from the Viceroy seem to have had a good effect upon the principal members of the Congress; the movement gradually declined, and it became little more than the mouthpiece of the class of educated Bengali Babus. But in estimating the position of the English in India, the opinion of that ever-increasing class, by whom the Press is largely worked, must always be taken into consideration.

One incident which, for awhile, attracted much attention in England was an outbreak in Manipur. In 1890 the Maharajah had been deposed by his brothers for incompetency. His successor had not proved satisfactory, and Mr. Quinton was sent, accompanied by some 500 troops, to set matters right. He summoned a Durbar, at which it was his intention to have arrested the Minister whose influence he believed to be the source of the misgovernment of the country. Warned in time, the Minister did not attend the Durbar. Some troops sent to apprehend him were fired upon, and the Residency was for many hours subjected to a sharp attack. In the evening Mr. Quinton and the other Englishmen were induced, on the pretext of a parley, to leave the Residency and visit the Palace. They were there assassinated (March 25, 1891). Armed intervention became necessary. With a small body of troops it was found possible to reassert British authority, and to place upon the throne a child, with the title of Rajah, under the care of a British officer. The wisdom of the attempt to change the Government, and the conduct of Mr. Quinton in planning the secret apprehension of the Minister, were severely criticised in England.

Outside the complications of the European system, and the quarrels indirectly connected with them, of which colonial expansion was the immediate cause, other questions of some importance, and not without a threatening aspect, arose between England and America. They were connected, as the French quarrel had been, with the rights of fishing, and affected both the eastern and western coasts of America. The first quarrel had reference to the eastern coast. The chief point at issue was the construction to be given to the long-established rule which granted territorial rights for a distance of three miles from the shore.

Fishery
quarrels with
America.

The rights of the American fishermen to ply their trade and to land in Canadian ports had been the cause of much dispute and of several treaties. The Americans had to all appearance gone beyond their treaty rights; and the Canadians, supported by the imperial Government, had seized and confiscated vessels fishing illegally. Very hot language had been used in America upon the subject, and threats had been uttered of such interruption of the intercourse between Canada and the States as would have caused a serious dislocation of trade. The American position was weak both legally and materially; the extant treaties were distinctly in favour of the Canadian contention; and the loss from interruption of intercourse would have pressed far more heavily upon the States than upon Canada. It was however thought desirable that the matter should be taken in hand by the British Government, and be treated as an international question. Accordingly, in 1887, Mr. Chamberlain crossed over to Canada; and there, in company with Sir Sackville West, the British Minister at Washington, and Sir Charles Tupper, the Canadian Minister in London, he met Mr. Bayard on the part of the United States, and concluded a treaty, signed on February 15, 1888. By this treaty the demands of the Americans were practically conceded. A clearer construction was given as to what constituted "territorial water." The large bays and gulfs exceeding three marine leagues in width were no longer to be regarded as inland seas, but were to be subject to the same rules as the open ocean; the restrictions laid by the fundamental Treaty of 1818 upon the resort of American fishermen to Canadian ports were to be removed, although except within definite limits the actual right of fishing near the shore was withheld. Even this restriction was to be removed if the United States would consent to renew the reciprocal commerce of fish and fish-oil duty free. It was only after much opposition that the Canadian Parliament could be brought to consent, for the sake of peace, to a treaty entirely disadvantageous to Canada. The Canadian concessions were however useless. A Presidential election was imminent. The feeling in America of opposition to any compromise with England was strong; and, with a view to securing votes, the Republican party refused to agree to ratify the treaty, favourable though it was to American interests. Still more surprising was it that Mr. Cleveland, the Democratic candidate, and himself the chief author of the treaty, apparently for the purpose of outbidding his Republican opponents immediately denounced it and declared the necessity of retaliatory measures against Canada. The step was not a successful one on his part;

General Harrison was elected President. Sir Julian Pauncefote took the place of Sir Sackville West, who, having unwisely mingled slightly in the political contest, had been obliged to withdraw. The treaty was abandoned, and the fishery question fell back into its old condition of uncertainty.

The second cause of friction with the United States was the long-standing dispute about the seal fishery in the Behring Sea. Russia had claimed the sea within the Aleutian Islands as an inland sea. The claim was preposterous, and England and America alike had frequently protested against it. In 1866 Russia had sold Alaska, its property on the American continent, to the States. In spite of their former protest, the States at once assumed the Russian position, and confiscated some English ships that had taken seals in the open sea. Their object was twofold, the retention of a valuable monopoly to the exclusion of the inhabitants of Vancouver Island or Canada, and the maintenance of the supply of seals, for it was chiefly tennales that were taken in the open sea. The ships which had been seized were condemned by the Local Court of Sitka in Alaska. The illegality of the verdict appeared so obvious that Lord Salisbury hoped to get it overruled by the Supreme Court. In this effort he failed, but he had at the same time taken the whole matter in hand, and had put it on a broader footing. He succeeded in bringing it to arbitration by a treaty signed in the early spring of 1892. After the lapse of a year the arbitrators made their report. It proved to be entirely in favour of the English contention as the law then stood; compensation for the shipmasters whose goods had been confiscated was thus secured. But for the future new regulations were made in accordance with the American view, not on legal grounds, but in order to secure the preservation of the seals, an object which both disputants really had at heart. No fishing was henceforth allowed within sixty miles of the Pribyloff Islands, the chief breeding-place of the seals; and a close time was fixed, during which all seal fishing was forbidden.

Every question as it arose had thus been handled with prudence and without bluster. To the majority even of the Opposition the conduct of foreign affairs had appeared judicious. Such objections as were made came chiefly from men of Radical tendencies. The exponent of these views was Sir Charles Dilke, a man who had given much thought to the foreign relations of the country. In a speech to his constituents, he declared that he wished to destroy the myth that Lord Salisbury's policy had won the approbation of the

Seal fishery
quarrel.

Sea.

Liberal party. He found much to blame in his policy of concession, and accused him of undue leaning to the Triple Alliance. The cession of Heligoland, which was a point of vast importance to Germany, and the whole arrangement of East Africa and Zanzibar were unnecessary concessions for which no adequate advantages had been obtained; in Egypt alone had the right policy been pursued. This criticism is interesting, because one of the chief causes of mistrust felt in the incoming Ministry was the belief that Mr. Morley and others were eager to carry out the long-promised retirement from Egypt. It was a common idea that a determined foreign policy was the monopoly of the Conservatives. But the attitude assumed by a speaker so Radical in his policy as Sir Charles Dilke, and the well-known views of Lord Rosebery, seemed to promise that British claims would be upheld at least as firmly by the new Ministry as by their predecessors.

CHAPTER V.

MR. GLADSTONE'S MINISTRY, August 15, 1892, to March 3, 1894.

THE CABINET.

<i>First Lord of the Treasury and Privy Seal,</i>	Mr. Gladstone.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Sir William Harcourt.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Herschell.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	
<i>Secretary for India,</i>	Earl of Kimberley.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Mr. Asquith.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Rosebery.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Marquis of Ripon.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Earl Spencer.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Mundella.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Mr. Arnold Morley.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Mr. Bryce.
<i>President of Local Government Board,</i>	Mr. H. H. Fowler.
<i>Vice-President of the Council of Education,</i>	Mr. Arthur Acland.
<i>First Commissioner of Works,</i>	Mr. G. Shaw-Lefevre.
<i>Chief Secretary for Scotland,</i>	Sir George Trevelyan.
<i>Chief Secretary for Ireland,</i>	Mr. John Morley.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>	Lord Houghton.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Mr. Samuel Walker.

THE general election, the vote of want of confidence, and the establishment in office of the new Government, was followed by an immediate prorogation. For five months the new Ministry was allowed to pursue its policy unquestioned, and to prepare for the coming struggle in January. The exact character of the expected Bill in favour of Home Rule was not disclosed. The speech-making fell chiefly to the Opposition. But the change of policy—conciliation as opposed to coercion—was at once visible. The general proclamation under the Crimes Act had already been withdrawn. There remained the special proclamation declaring the National League to be a dangerous association, and the two obnoxious clauses of the Crimes Act authorising the change of venue in trials and extended rights of search. These were all allowed to drop, and the Act became in Mr. Morley's hands entirely inoperative. Furthermore, the Irish Secretary did not shrink from moving in the difficult matter of restitution of evicted tenants. A Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into their claims, at the head of which was set

an English judge, Mr. Justice Mathew. The constitution of the Commission and the opening speech of Mr. Justice Mathew excited extreme anger among the Unionists. Mr. Morley did not hide the fact that the members of the Commission were chiefly of Nationalist tendencies. Mathew's speech contained certainly a strong indictment of some of the Irish landlords. It was evident that an attempt was to be made to govern Ireland without exceptional laws, and to treat with much sympathy and indulgence the claims and conduct of the Irish people.

It was not in Ireland only that the respect for national wishes was shown. Mr. Gladstone had become so filled with ideas of nationality that to him the Welsh appeared scarcely less a separate nation than the Irish. In his speeches in Wales he implied in no doubtful manner that he would favourably consider the disestablishment of the Church in Wales as though it were a Welsh Church, and would throw no obstacle in the way of changes in the Welsh Land Law analogous to those he had carried out in Ireland.

In England the questions which required immediate handling were the distress among the large class of unemployed and the clamorously demanded right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square. Both Mr. Mundella, President of the Board of Trade, and Mr. Asquith, the Home Secretary, showed skill and firmness in meeting the difficulties which arose. While listening with much sympathy to the case of the unemployed, Mr. Mundella made it plain that legislation in their favour was impossible; but at the same time he organised in his office a Labour Department, from which he hoped they would derive much benefit. Mr. Asquith, adhering to the view that the use of Trafalgar Square was a privilege and not a right, consented to allow meetings to be held there under certain limitations and conditions to be arranged with the police. The measure proved successful. A full meeting or two were held, and then, opposition having disappeared, they gradually dwindled to nothing.

Abroad there was no dislocation of policy. Nowhere was the expected weakness of the Government visible. As to Uganda, where the East African Company had proved unable to maintain its position, the Foreign Office desired further information, but showed no signs of being willing recklessly to withdraw; a special commissioner, with very large powers, was appointed to examine the position in all its aspects. In Egypt, though Mr. Scott Moncrief and Sir Alfred Milner were recalled, it was only

Trafalgar
Square
meetings.

Foreign
affairs.

because they were wanted at home. Their places were satisfactorily filled. Colonel Kitchener was put at the head of the Egyptian Army as Sirdar, and Sir Evelyn Baring (now become Lord Cromer) continued to exercise his great beneficial influence over the Khedival Government. Various difficulties however seemed to be threatening. Abbas, the young Khedive, who had succeeded his father in the beginning of 1892, began to show signs of restlessness. Not unnaturally, there was always a party in Egypt which, either from a real nationalist feeling or won over by the intrigues of France, was strongly opposed to the British supremacy. This party hailed the efforts of Abbas to assume a more independent position and to assert his right of nominating his own Ministers by the removal of Mustapha Fehmi, and the appointment of Fakri, a member of the Nationalist party, as chief Minister. The firm attitude assumed by Lord Cromer overawed the Khedive, and a compromise was effected by which Riaz Pasha was placed at the head of the Government (January 1893). The support given to Lord Cromer by the English Government, made evident to the Egyptians by an increase of the army of occupation, enabled him to encounter successfully for the time the rising feeling of the Nationalists. But the year did not pass without further indications of dissatisfaction, which required to be met by great tact and self-restraint. Fortunately the required skill was not found wanting, and the general course of improvement both in financial and in public works continued unchecked.

The Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament (January 1893) made clear to the public what had already been foreshadowed in Ministerial utterances, that, while the first place in the Liberal programme was to be occupied by Home Rule, many other items of what was known as the Newcastle programme were to find a place in it. Bills were promised for improved registration, and for the establishment of equality of franchise by the limitation of each elector to a single vote; for defining employers' liability; for the limitation in certain cases of the hours of labour; for the creation of parish councils; for securing local option; and for "preventing the growth of new vested interests in ecclesiastical establishments in Scotland and Wales," a preliminary step towards disestablishment. As was foreseen at the time, as the Ministers themselves must indeed have foreseen, but few of these measures were carried through. The way was still stopped by the Home Rule question.

The "Government of Ireland" Bill, produced as soon as the Address was passed, differed considerably from that of 1886. The Irish Legislature was to consist, as in England,

Opening of
Parliament.

Home Rule
Bill, 1893.

of two bodies regarded as representing an upper and a lower House, a legislative council and a legislative assembly. The Council and the Assembly were to be elected by different constituencies, the first by those rated at £20, the second, 103 in number, by the existing constituencies. The legislature was to busy itself exclusively with Irish affairs. Questions of peace and war, of treason, of the law of aliens, and of external trade were withdrawn from its purview. Religious freedom was to be secured. The Viceroy was to be appointed for six years, irrespective of religion or party. An executive committee of the Irish Privy Council was to act as his Cabinet. Subject to the sanction of the Sovereign and the advice of his Cabinet, he had the power of veto on Irish Bills. If the two Houses disagreed, they were to be called to meet in common, and the question was to be left in the hands of this joint meeting. An appeal lay to the Privy Council, if the Irish Parliament should overstep its constitutional rights. As a precaution, in order to secure the purity of the Bench, the judges were to be irremovable; two of them were to be specially appointed to consider financial questions. The Irish constabulary, left during the period of transition under the authority of the English administration, was to be gradually absorbed into a local police. The financial arrangements might be reconsidered after fifteen years. Thus far the Irish constitution only was considered. The more difficult questions connected with its relation to England remained. One of the chief objections to the former Bill had been the exclusion of Irish members from the central Parliament, which was regarded as incompatible with its imperial character. The counter arguments alleged had rested on the impropriety of allowing the Irish, over whose affairs Great Britain had no longer any control, to exercise what might at times prove a paramount influence over English affairs. In the new Bill Mr. Gladstone attempted to avoid the dilemma. Reduced in number to 80, the Irish members were to enjoy a limited right of voting in the imperial Parliament. A line was drawn between what was exclusively English and what was imperial. Questions expressly confined to Great Britain, taxes not levied in Ireland, and appropriation of money for anything except imperial services, were withdrawn from their cognizance. The financial arrangements had been also modified, and the payment of a lump sum by Ireland (which had been stigmatised as tribute) disappeared from the Bill. The Irish Budget, as explained by Mr. Gladstone, could be so arranged as to place in the hands of the Irish Legislature a surplus of £500,000. Certain changes took place subsequently in these arrangements; and finally the payment from Ireland was

reached smooth water. The Committee stage lay before it, and the tactics of the Opposition were avowedly to destroy it if they could not stop it. It was plain that every point would be fought at exorbitant length; it took five days to carry the first clause, which was concerned with the supremacy of the imperial executive.

Mr. Gladstone at first showed himself somewhat conciliatory, and accepted amendments from the opposition so freely as to excite the anger of the Irish and even to threaten a dissolution of the party. He found himself almost compelled to take up a stiffer attitude. The struggle thus became still more embittered, and the Committee, which began its sittings on the 8th of May, had by the 28th of June got no further than the fourth clause. It became absolutely necessary that some measure should be taken to vindicate the authority of the majority. On the following day Mr. Gladstone introduced a resolution of which he had given previous notice. The clauses of the Bill were divided into sections, and a time limit was fixed, within which all the clauses in each section were to be put to the vote, whether they had been debated or not. The opposition to such a resolution was of course vehement. Mr. Balfour stigmatised it as an attempt to silence the voice of Great Britain. The Government and their supporters refused to join in the debate, in spite of the taunts of their adversaries. Mr. Chamberlain declared that they were "the slaves of the Irish party." "There sit the men," said he, pointing to the Irish members, "who pull the strings of the Prime Minister of England. The British empire is being sold by private treaty." The resolution was, however, carried by a majority of 32. There thus arose a second precedent for what has been since known as the guillotine. Once before, in 1887, a similar resolution had been found necessary in order to force the Crimes Bill through committee. But Mr. Gladstone had evidently shrunk from using the precedent, and had only introduced his resolution with extreme regret and under a feeling of its absolute necessity. He pointed out that the real question was whether the majority should or should not prevail, "If the will of the majority was not allowed to prevail, Parliamentary institutions would be a mockery and an imposture." That, in spite of their violent outcries against this method of procedure, the Conservatives should have subsequently adopted it, seems to show that in face of an energetic and factious minority some such method is a matter of necessity.

Home Rule
Bill in Com-
mittee.

The "Guillo-
tine," June 29,
1893.

As a matter of course, it now became the business of the Opposition to bring discredit on the Bill by preventing the discussion of many of its clauses. It thus resulted that not more than ten of the original forty clauses were discussed at all. One alone, clause 9, of the third section occupied the whole week allowed for that section. It must be confessed however that it concerned the most important and difficult subject of the Bill, the retention of the Irish members in the imperial Parliament. On this point, Mr. Gladstone found it necessary entirely to change the original provisions of the Bill. Explaining that there were three possible means of solution—the absence of the Irish members, their complete presence, or their occasional presence with limited powers of voting—he stated that the Government were willing to be led by the wishes of the House. He himself had preferred and had suggested in his Bill of 1886 the entire removal of the Irish members from the House, and it had been the chief cause of the failure of that Bill. He would willingly have withdrawn from that position and have admitted them freely, but as there were frequent expressions of a strong feeling against this step, he and his colleagues did not think it right to urge the representatives of Great Britain "to accept a system under which members coming from Ireland were at the same time to have a complete command over their own domestic affairs, and to possess a power of controlling the domestic affairs of Great Britain equal to that possessed by those who represented Great Britain." The Government, he said, had therefore adopted the system of limited voting, but were willing to accept any change in this respect which the House preferred. The majority appeared to favour the unconditional admission of the Irish members to the Parliament at Westminster, and it was in this form that clause 9 was passed. When the fatal day arrived on which the knife of the guillotine was to fall on all the remaining clauses, a scene of violence probably unprecedented in Parliament was presented. Mr. Chamberlain had used the words with regard to the regularity with which his party followed Mr. Gladstone, "The Prime Minister calls 'black,' and they say 'it is good;' he calls 'white,' and they say 'it is better.' It is always the voice of a god; never since the time of Herod has there been such slavish adulation." At the name of "Herod" a furious storm arose, amidst which were heard cries of "Judas." It was in vain that the Chairman tried to enforce the closure. Some how or other, in the midst of the uproar, blows were given, and indescribable disorder for some minutes raged. It was

Debate on
retention of
Irish members.

Riotous scenes
in the House,
August 1893.

hushed however by the return of the Speaker, and the forty-seventh and last sitting of the Committee was at length brought to an end. A few days afterwards (August 30) the third reading was taken. Again exceptions were raised to the principles of the Bill, but at last, on the 1st of September, it was carried by a majority of 34 in a House of 568. An examination of the minority showed that without the Irish members the Government would have failed to carry the Bill by 23 votes.

There was no doubt as to the reception of the Bill when it was brought before the House of Lords. A House of hereditary legislators is almost of necessity conservative; a House which represents property, and little else, can scarcely fail to object to any change which threatens the form of society on which its position depends. It was to a very willing audience that Lord Salisbury had propounded his plausible theory that, although it might be unwise, even perhaps impossible, for the House of Lords to withstand the firmly expressed wishes of the nation, it had the power, and indeed the duty, of insisting upon the clear expression of the national opinion, and of forcing a dissolution if it believed that the House of Commons did not truly represent the feeling of the people. This was the line of argument pursued by the Duke of Devonshire, to whom, as leader of the Liberal Unionists, was given the task of replying to Lord Spencer's introduction of the second reading of the Bill. To that argument, no doubt what had taken place in the Lower House gave additional weight. The small majority, the sudden change of opinion in Committee as to the retention of Irish members, the paucity of amendments moved from the Ministerial side, and the wholesale application of the closure, almost unprecedented and bearing the appearance of a violent restriction of the right of free debate, certainly gave colour to the assertion that the Bill was little more than the expression of the views of one man, by whose imperious will it had been forced through the House. The debate lasted four days. It was remarkable for a virulent and able attack upon Mr. Gladstone by the Duke of Argyll, for a very temperate and sympathetic speech from Lord Spencer, and for a playful argument from Lord Rosebery, who concealed his real earnestness under a tone of easy banter, but whose arguments disclosed that opportunist temper which has constantly marked his career. "Home Rule was not to him a fanaticism nor a question of sentiment, scarcely even a question of history, nor a council of perfection, but merely the best thing which could be done under the circumstances." But from whichever side

Home Rule
rejected in the
Upper House.

the speaking came, it was well understood that it could have no effect; the conclusion was foregone. In an unusually crowded House there were but 41 votes in favour of the Bill, while 419 joined in rejecting it.

Time had undoubtedly favoured the Unionist cause. The extraordinary powers of delay which are inherent in the constitution, and the conservative temper which, in spite of the general energy and progressive force of the people, is the marked characteristic of the English race, had had an opportunity of asserting themselves. While the relief which the Irish had been taught to expect was kept in abeyance, strong in their hope for the future they had for awhile laid aside those extreme measures of discontent which had compelled England to take notice of them. The tension was relaxed, and the Irish question, grave though it was, no longer held its place as the one great necessary question to be solved. Those men who felt deeply the necessity of changes in England itself were no longer content to postpone the realisation of the reforms they had at heart. If the great composite Liberal party was to be kept together, it was necessary that some attempt should be made to satisfy its most eager supporters. From a mere party point of view, whether for the general Liberal interest or to secure the passage of the Home Rule Bill, a consolidation of interests was a necessary preliminary to a new general election. The claim of the House of Lords to force a dissolution was therefore entirely disregarded, and the Government proceeded to carry forward some of the items of that over-extensive programme with which they had ushered in the session.

English Bills
proceeded
with.

A measure had already been introduced for the improvement of Parliamentary registration. It was admitted that many of the anomalies of the existing system were cured by it; but some of the younger Conservatives, seeing in it, as they said, rather a small Reform Bill than a Registration Bill, succeeded in stopping its course and referring it to a Select Committee, and it was no further heard of. A similar disaster befell all attempts at temperance legislation. A Local Option Bill had been introduced, by which a certain number of electors might claim a poll, and, if a two-thirds majority was there obtained, the issue of new licences and the renewal of the old licences were to be alike stopped for three years. The Bill refused to recognise any right of compensation to the existing licence holders, but allowed them three years' grace. The Bishop of Chester, in the Upper House, treated of

Registration
Bill.

Temperance
Bills.

the same subject from a different point of view, and introduced a plan for the adoption of what is known as the Gothenburg system. A company was to be formed in any area which expressed a desire for it, and was to have entire command of the public-houses, which it was to be allowed to purchase at a price fixed by arbitration. Beyond a dividend of 5 per cent., all profits of the trade were to be devoted to public improvements in the area; the number of public-houses was fixed at one to every thousand inhabitants in towns, one to every six hundred in the country. Neither the Government Bill nor the Bishop's Bill got as far as the second reading. But besides these abortive efforts, two Bills of prime importance, the Employers' Liability Bill and the Parish Councils Bill, had been introduced and fairly launched upon their career. The dilatory tactics of the Opposition made it impossible to do more than complete the necessary financial work before the close of the session, although Government took to itself the whole time of the House and kept it sitting till late in September.

An autumn session, to begin on the 2d of November, and to last, as Autumn session, Nov. 2. Mr. Gladstone prophesied, till Christmas, was a matter of necessity. The Government determined to press forward and to carry at least the two Bills which had already made some progress. They were to be regarded as "non-contentious"—that is though they had not passed the second reading, their principle was to be regarded as accepted, and their second reading to be at once taken. The epithet "non-contentious" proved strangely ill applied. The whole session was occupied in a long and detailed struggle over their clauses.

The Parish Councils Bill was undertaken as a completion and enlargement of the Local Government Act of 1888. Parish Councils Bill. It was to apply to the rural districts only. The numerous authorities—such as the Rural Sanitary Authorities, the Improvement Commissioners, the Local Boards, and the Highway Authorities—were to be reconstituted as District Councils. Below them in the hierarchy of authorities was to stand the Parish Council as the primary unit of local administration. In every parish there was to be constituted a parish meeting; and in villages of over 300 inhabitants, or in groups of smaller parishes, there was to be a Parish Council. To this Council was to be given the powers hitherto held by the Vestry, in all matters not directly affecting the Church. It was to appoint the overseers, to hold the parish property, the administration of the Allotment Act, and the charities with the exception of

those belonging to the Church. In order to carry out its duties, the Parish Council was to be armed with powers to hire and to purchase land compulsorily. It was also charged with the right of calling on the County Council to set the District Council in motion, if its duties as to sanitation or highways were neglected. All elections were to be carried on by ballot and on the "one man one vote" principle; this included the election of the Board of Guardians, from which all *ex-officio* members were henceforward to be excluded.

As in the case of the extension of the franchise to the labourer, and in the case of the establishment of local government, the opposition which the Bill encountered rested on the instinctive mistrust of the class below them felt by the wealthier classes. They could not bring themselves to believe that compulsory powers could be safely intrusted to the labourer, or that such an instrument would not be used as a weapon against themselves. The transference of the management of the charities seemed to open a door to unrestrained jobbery, and the removal of the existing trustees seemed an uncalled-for attack on the vested interests of their own class. It was with more reason that they dreaded the suggested changes in the administration of the Poor Law; it was not unreasonable to suppose that the judicious relief of poverty, at all times a matter of great difficulty, would in the hands of the members of a Parish Council degenerate before long into a system of indiscriminate outdoor relief involving an undue expenditure of public funds. It was upon these points that the discussion chiefly turned. An opportunity occurred which enabled the opponents of the Bill to justify their lengthened opposition to what was supposed to be a non-contentious measure. They were able to assert that with respect to the transference of the charities the principle of the Bill had been tampered with. Mr. Fowler, in introducing the Bill, had promised to deal liberally with the existing trustees; and this had been regarded as an essential part of the Bill. But the feeling of the Radical wing of the party in favour of putting the charities in the hands of the people themselves was so strong, that the Government thought it necessary to accept an amendment from their own side by which a majority, at all events, of the trustees should be elected by the Parish Council. Mr. Fowler's promise seemed thus to be entirely ignored. Nor did the Poor Law clauses escape without alteration. The Opposition urged that the whole question of Poor Law administration should be withdrawn from the Bill and treated as a separate matter. The Government declined to yield on this point, and successfully resisted

Second reading of Parish Councils Bill, Nov. 7.

all attempts to reintroduce *ex-officio* or nominated members of the Board of Guardians. But with a view of making some concession to the claims of the wealthier classes, they consented to allow the Parish Council to elect its chairman and vice-chairman and one or two other members from outside its own body. Room was thus made for the reintroduction into the Council of a few men of influence. Even with these concessions the Bill could not be brought to a conclusion before Christmas; and it was found necessary to continue the session in the new year.

The same fate attended the Employers' Liability Bill. The struggle waxed hottest over the clauses which forbade "contracting out." It was an essential part of the Bill that no individual workman should have the power of contracting himself out of its provisions, and it was this compulsory character which gave it its chief value in the eyes of the Trades Unionists and of that party which was eager for the extension of what was sometimes spoken of as State Socialism. There already existed, especially in large firms and mereantile concerns, schemes of mutual insurance to which master and man alike contributed. The Opposition urged that the new Bill would deal a heavy blow at the liberty of the individual workman, and go far to destroy an arrangement which was not only quite as advantageous to the workman as that which the Bill proposed, but which offered a sure and easy method of closing the gap so often found between the interests of employer and employed. The Bill was however read a third time in the House of Commons (November 23). In the House of Lords it encountered fresh and more successful opposition. The large employers, such as Lord Dudley and Lord Stalbridge, protested against the destruction of their insurance schemes, and prophesied the certain diminution of amicable relations. The Duke of Argyll, as usual, talked vehemently in favour of individual liberty, while Lord Salisbury threw all his weight into the same scale. The practical step taken was the acceptance of an amendment moved by Lord Dudley. Basing his action upon an amendment moved by Mr. MacLaren and carried in the Lower House, by which great existing insurance schemes were omitted from the action of the Bill, Lord

**Lord Dudley's
Amendment,
December 8.**

Dudley moved an amendment carrying the matter a step further, and including in the exceptions not only present but future insurance schemes. The effect of the amendment was little less than the establishment of the general right of "contracting out." It was accepted in the House of Lords by a large majority. When the Bill was returned to the Commons, this amendment was opposed with all its strength by the Government, who

went so far as to declare that its adoption would be fatal to the Bill; and, in spite of the influence of Mr. Chamberlain, who stigmatised the action of the Government as a mere attempt to get up a cry against the House of Lords, the rejection of the amendment was carried (December 21) by the full majority of 62, and the Bill returned to the Upper House.

The two Bills were thus left incomplete when Parliament adjourned for Christmas, with the expectation of a still further prolongation of a session which was already of unprecedented length. As Mr. Gladstone, in spite of the many hard things which were said as to his arbitrary nature, was far too fully imbued with the old traditions of Parliament to look with favour upon the frequent employment of the closure, some other method had to be adopted to get the hotly contested Parish Councils Bill through the House of Commons. Means were found in a compromise, which was arranged between the leaders of the two parties,

**Compromise on
Parish
Councils Bill.**

on the two great points at issue. In addition to the chairman or vice-chairman, Boards of Guardians were to be allowed to co-opt two other members; and the definition of ecclesiastical charity was slightly altered. On the other side, the opposition to compulsory hiring of allotments was to be withdrawn if certain limits as to the character of the land hired were introduced, ostensibly for the protection of the tenant-farmer and landlord. It was thus found possible (on January 4) to get through all the remaining clauses of the Bill. Both Bills having now passed the Lower House, an adjournment was moved on the 12th of January in order to allow the House of Lords time to consider them. The Employers' Liability Bill had already been before the Upper House, and had been largely altered. It was now again sent back to the Lower House with the alterations confirmed. The reception of the Parish Councils Bill was not more conciliatory. All the chief provisions of the Bill were more or less altered. The population necessary to authorise a Parish Council was raised, the

**Parish Coun-
cils Bill in the
Lords.**

right of hiring land was placed under closer control, the franchise of voters at the parish meeting was limited, the financial clauses were altered, and the transference of the management of the charities from the old trustees to elective boards was disallowed. Thus far the Conservatives, with their allies the Liberal Unionists, in spite of grave warnings from the Government benches, had had it all their own way. There seemed however to be a line beyond which the conservative energy of the Liberal Unionists would not carry them. A motion of the Earl of

Onslow demanding that no one should vote either at a meeting or a council who had not personally paid his rates, a motion which if carried would have entailed the wholesale disfranchisement of the labourer, at length roused the Duke of Devonshire to the declaration that he could not allow as practical or politic, considering the position of the two Houses, so wide a policy of disfranchisement. Lord Salisbury, although he continued to impress upon his hearers as a grave and fatal defect in the Bill, that it placed the power of expending the rates in the hands of those who did not personally pay rates, yielded to the pressure of his allies and recommended in face of the Duke of Devonshire's attitude the withdrawal of the motion. Enough had certainly been done to show the determination of the Lords to throw every obstacle in the way of the Liberal Government.

When the House of Commons reassembled (February 12), the two Bills were sent back to them for consideration entirely changed in their character by the action of the Upper House. Was the Government to allow itself to be thus overridden? There was every indication of the approach of a severe constitutional struggle. Strengthened by the action of the Liberal Unionists in the House of Lords, the Government found it possible to reject most of the Lord's amendments with respect to the Parish Councils Bill. After a somewhat lengthened interchange of opinions and sending to and fro of the Bill, it was found possible to arrive at compromises

fairly satisfactory to both parties, and the Bill was at length passed. The Parish Councils Bill met a different fate. Although Lord Dudley's amendment was again rejected by a majority of 22, certain cross voting so reduced the majority that a sort of compromise setting a time limit to the operations of the Bill was carried against the Government by two votes. It was not to be expected that so feebly supported an opposition would produce much result or affect the vote of the House of Lords. The Bill was sent up (February 19) only to be again returned with the Commons' amendment disallowed. It had been Mr. Gladstone's intention firmly to withstand the action of the Peers. Their persistent opposition to the ministerial measures had driven him to regard the assertion of the supremacy of the Lower House as an object of the first importance. He had hoped to vindicate the power of the Commons by carrying the simple formula "that the Lords' amendments be set aside." The triumph which he had promised himself was denied him; it was discovered that this striking form could be used only when the privileges of the Commons were touched. The

Parish Councils Bill passed.

Employers' Liability Bill dropped.

expectation of the public had been raised to a high pitch, and it seemed a sorry conclusion when the Prime Minister was compelled to confine himself to a motion which led at once to the entire dropping of the Bill. The Lords had proved too strong for him. He had not indeed been forced to accept their amendments, but he had been obliged to allow their power of destruction. At length, on March 3, 1894, the session which had begun in January 1893 was brought to an end.

Disposed to peace in moderation as Mr. Gladstone was, and great as was his dislike to the acquisition of new imperial responsibilities, he found it at times impossible to withstand the pressure brought to bear upon him. What is sometimes spoken of as "the natural expansion of the race," the offspring of the eager search for wealth disguised under that form of patriotism which sets before it as its object the extension of the empire, was too strong for him. Thus it happened in the case of the Matabele War in 1893. A body of adventurers had been enrolled as a Chartered Company under the influence of Mr. Cecil Rhodes in 1889, to hold and administer a territory in South Africa which by a liberal interpretation of agreements was held to have been conceded by Lobengula, Chief of the Matabele, the dominant tribe of intrusive Zulus. The territory in question lay north of the Transvaal and to the west of the Portuguese settlement on the coast, and was known as Mashonaland. A quarrel between the warlike Matabele and their former vassals the Mashonas produced a raid of so cruel and devastating a character that the European settlers were driven to resist it. As was inevitable in the general confusion, the Matabele were unable to draw a clear line between the territory of the Chartered Company and territory under British protection. The frontier of the Bechuanaland Protectorate was violated, and it became impossible for the imperial Government to stand aloof. The invasion of Lobengula's territory was authorised, and resulted, after some severe fighting, in the complete overthrow of the Matabele power. Bulawayo, Lobengula's chief town, was occupied, while he himself fled towards the north and died early in the following year. A vast addition was thus made to the country already administered by the Chartered Company. Under the name of Rhodesia it entered upon a rapid though not uninterrupted course of social and material progress.

Long though the session had been, its result was very scanty; very few of the great Government measures had been brought to completion. But though a legislative

Close of Gladstone's career.

VICT.

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failure, it had been in many ways a personal triumph for the Minister. He had shown no signs of weakness in his management of his party. Though unable to satisfy his Radical followers, who, irritated by the lengthy struggle and extreme pertinacity of the Opposition, were threatening to force his hand, he still found himself at the head of a united party. He had upheld the dignity of the Ministry. He had refused to allow the Opposition to force upon him against his will a declaration of his plan for national defence. He had accepted the full responsibility for the Matabele War. He had defended with skill and temper the action of the Lord Chancellor, rudely assaulted by the Radicals for not immediately filling the Bench with Liberal Partisans. It was the last of his triumphs. The close of the session was something much more important than the cessation of a term of Parliamentary struggle. It was the close of the political life of one of the most remarkable statesmen ever produced by England. His impeachment of the House of Lords, during the discussion of the Lords' amendments to the Parish Councils Bill, was the last speech delivered by Mr. Gladstone in Parliament. A political life of more than sixty years, during much of which he had occupied a position of influence seldom equalled, was drawing to its natural conclusion; and though at eighty-four years of age he was still exhibiting a marvellous intellectual readiness, and a mastery of the details of party management which enabled him to hold the various sections of his followers together as no one else could have done, yet the infirmities of age were beginning to make themselves felt. Both ear and eye had lost something of their old acuteness, and the mind, whose versatility was still remarkable, was losing its sense of proportion, and was acquiring something of the old man's pertinacity in the pursuit of a single object. The speech which he delivered, and which many people at the time understood to be his last, was in no sense a farewell address, there were no personal allusions. Yet in its deeper meaning it marked a consciousness that the hour for retirement had struck. The great objects to which the last years of his life had been directed, the removal of the blot upon the empire caused by the persistent hostility of Ireland, and the establishment of a just and acceptable form of government there, had been ruined; the force on which he had relied to attain them, the force of the popular will of a well-ordered democracy, had been suddenly and completely checked. Wealth, property, aristocracy, typified in the House of Lords, and making full use of the constitutional powers of that House, had been strong enough to impose their will upon the nation, not on this question only, but on every other. In Mr. Gladstone's eyes the House

of Lords had become the great obstacle to every form of advance. It was not, as he explained, the little amendments which he was now accepting which were the real points at issue. "We are compelled to accompany that acceptance," he said, "with the sorrowful declaration that the differences, not of a casual or temporary nature merely, but differences of conviction, differences of prepossession, differences of mental habit, and differences of fundamental tendency, between the House of Lords and the House of Commons, appear to have reached a development in the present year such as to create a state of things of which we are compelled to say that in our judgment it cannot continue. The issue which is raised between a deliberative assembly elected by the votes of more than six million people, and a deliberative assembly occupied by many men of virtue, by many men of talent, of course with considerable diversities and varieties, is a controversy which when once raised must go forward to an issue. . . . My duty terminates by calling the attention of the House to the fact, which it is really impossible to set aside, that in considering these amendments, limited as their scope may seem to be, we are considering a part, an essential and inseparable part, of a question enormously large, a question which has become profoundly acute, which will demand a settlement, and must receive at an early date that settlement from the highest authority." Although this question, except for a brief space, has not assumed the exact shape which Mr. Gladstone foresaw, he was right in his prophecy. His departure from political life is coincident with a strong reaction towards the old conservative ideals. The claims of property and wealth have continually risen into prominence; and class distinctions, none the less real because tempered by a kindly and patronising interest in the well-being of the lower orders, have resumed much of their old strength.

For four years longer Mr. Gladstone lived in retirement, vigorous and active-minded to the last. A painful illness, magnanimously borne, came to a close on May 19, 1898. The storms of party warfare which had beaten so wildly around him were for a moment hushed. The fervid admiration he had won, the political hatred he had excited, were merged in a touching unanimity of respectful regret and acknowledgment of his transcendent abilities, as the grave closed over the great statesman at his public funeral in Westminster Abbey.

Gladstone's
last speech.
March 1, 1894.

Gladstone's
death.

CHAPTER VI.

LORD ROSEBERY'S MINISTRY (March 3, 1894, to June 24, 1895).

<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	{					Lord Rosebery.
<i>President of the Council,</i>						
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>						Sir William Harcourt.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>						Lord Herschell.
<i>Secretary for India,</i>						Mr. H. H. Fowler.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>						Mr. Asquith.
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>						Earl of Kimberley.
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>						Marquis of Ripon.
<i>War Secretary,</i>						Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>						Earl Spencer.
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>						Mr. James Bryce.
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>						Mr. Arnold Morley.
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	{					Lord Tweedmouth.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>						
<i>President of Local Government Board,</i>						Mr. G. Shaw-Lefevre.
<i>Vice-President of the Council of Education,</i>						Mr. Arthur Acland.

IRELAND.

<i>Lord Lieutenant,</i>						Lord Houghton.*
<i>Chief Secretary,</i>						Mr. John Morley.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>						Mr. Samuel Walker.*

SCOTLAND.

<i>Chief Secretary,</i>						Sir George Trevelyan.
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* Not in the Cabinet.

ON the 3d of March the long-expected resignation of Mr. Gladstone took place, and Lord Rosebery was offered and accepted the position of Prime Minister. He undertook to carry on the Government on the same lines as his predecessor. The conduct of affairs had indeed led to a situation which somewhat suited Lord Rosebery's views. A Home Ruler and consistent supporter of Mr. Gladstone, he had none of the enthusiasm for Irish self-government which had induced Mr. Gladstone to make it almost the sole object of his political aspirations. He had no wish that it should, as it had hitherto done, entirely overshadow the many reforms required in other parts of the empire; he had no objection to allow the question to remain for the present in suspense. His view of Irish self-government was complicated with a large though scarcely formulated conception of a great federated empire. On the other hand, he earnestly desired the completion of

many of the objects at which the Liberal party aimed, and his practical character revolted at the condition of impotency to which Liberal legislation appeared to be reduced by the action of the House of Lords. He was ready therefore at once not only to take upon himself the duty of leading the Liberal advance along its old lines, but also to throw all his energies into that struggle with the Upper House which Mr. Gladstone had indicated as the necessary preliminary to any successful Liberal work.

If the restoration of old party lines was desirable, it was unfortunate that the maintenance of Home Rule as a very prominent item in the Liberal programme was a matter of necessity; party pledges and the distribution of parties in Parliament put an insurmountable obstacle in the way of dropping it. It may indeed be questioned whether the Unionists (who, but for Home Rule, might to all appearance have returned to the Liberal fold) had not already gone too far in their alliance with their Conservative friends to allow of their return. They had deeply modified the policy of the Conservative party. Mr. Chamberlain was already shaking off his earlier democratic impulses, and the line of cleavage was fast being drawn between radical and moderate Liberal, rather than between Liberal and Conservative. At all events, no sign of the reconstitution of a united Liberal party was seen. Even in the Ministerial majority a want of unanimity began to show itself, threatening further disruption. The Government were defeated on the Address by their own followers. An amendment moved by Mr. Labouchere to the effect that the House of Lords should be deprived of its power of veto was carried against the Government, which had to submit to the somewhat humiliating necessity of withdrawing the Address and substituting a new one. The incident was of course without result, but indicated the temper of the extreme Ministerialists sufficiently to explain the impossibility of any reunion of parties. The Ministerial majority in fact was too small for the purposes of a strong Government. Scarcely any of their measures could be brought to completion.

A Bill for the disestablishment of the Welsh Church was dropped after the first reading; a Registration Bill, directed to cure what was allowed to be a scandalous condition of things, and aimed chiefly against the abuse of plural voting, was stigmatised as a mere party measure in preparation for the coming election, and did not get beyond its second reading; the Evicted Tenants Bill, for the purpose of re-establishing in their farms in

No possibility
of Liberal
reunion.

Various Bills
introduced.

Ireland those who in the late land-war had been driven from them, was indeed carried in the Lower House by the use of the most stringent form of closure, but was at once rejected by the Lords (August 4, 1894).

It was only on financial questions that the Government was able to gain a distinct success. Sir W. Harcourt's Budget secured them this victory. The difficulties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been increased by the large expenditure required for the navy. The sense of national insecurity, and the necessity for maintaining an irresistible naval force, which had given rise to the Naval Defence Act of March 1889, had not diminished. The stipulations of that Act had been carried out, and the Government had undertaken great and costly works in the improvement of harbours and in the establishment of naval barracks, and had begun building a large naval dock at Gibraltar. The programme laid down by the Defence Act had been completed. But foreign countries had meanwhile added to their navies; and, on the principle that the fleet of Great Britain should be a match for any two foreign fleets combined, Lord Spencer now thought it necessary to set on foot another great scheme of naval increase, to be completed as before in five years. The naval estimates, which had been prepared in February, showed an increase of £3,000,000 upon those of the year 1893-1894; and Mr. Gladstone just before his resignation had found himself unable to approve of a policy so wholly repugnant to the peaceful and economical traditions of his life. He would say, as we are told by Mr. Morley, "My name stands in Europe as a symbol of the policy of peace, moderation, and non-aggression. What would be said of my active participation in a policy that will be taken as plunging England into the whirlpool of militarism? For more than sixty-two years I have uniformly opposed militarism." Mr. Gladstone's retirement and the substitution of Lord Rosebery, whose views of imperial duty were somewhat different, allowed the production of the enlarged estimates. This great increase of expenditure, on the army and navy, on education, and on grants to assist local taxation, had raised the demands upon the revenue of the coming year to over £100,000,000. Sir William Harcourt estimated the deficit at four and a half millions. He did not propose to obtain this sum by borrowing, but by a rectification of what are known as the Death Duties. A duty was first to be laid upon the value of all property, whether real or personal, settled or unsettled, upon the fundamental principle that upon death the State should take a share of all money passing to a new owner. But

The Budget,
April 1894.

in the imposition of this tax the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced the principle of graduation. The share to be claimed by the State was to vary from 1 per cent. upon estates of £500 to 8 per cent. upon estates of over £1,000,000. This general tax included and destroyed what had hitherto been known as the Probate and Account Duties. There remained a second tax hitherto known as the Legacy and Succession Duties. These were henceforward to fall equally upon real and personal property. In addition to the advantages likely to result from these great changes, he thought it necessary to add another penny to the income-tax for the coming year, and also a small additional duty upon spirits and upon beer. The Budget was very thoroughly discussed in Committee, and met with great opposition. But in spite of the pressure of his own party, Sir W. Harcourt declined to make use of the closure, and by patience and firmness succeeded in carrying his propositions almost unaltered. The change introduced was far-reaching, and its success as a financial measure has been since abundantly proved, although at the time it excited strong feelings of anger among the wealthier classes. They found a spokesman in the Duke of Devonshire, who, with a want of dignity unexpected from a statesman of so high a character, complained bitterly of the blow inflicted upon his class by the Bill. Henceforward it would be no longer possible, he urged, for men in his position to exhibit that easy liberality which was so advantageous to themselves and to the country.

Alteration of
the Death
Duties.

The rejection of the Evicted Tenants' Bill in the House of Lords was received by the nation with more equanimity than suited the views of a Government who were determined to rest their claim to popularity on their opposition to the Upper House. The autumn oratory, which had now become an habitual incident of party warfare, was chiefly directed to this question; and it was understood that, when Parliament reassembled, the great effort of the Government would be to secure the passage of a hostile resolution against the House of Lords. Some surprise was felt that there was no hint of any such intention in the Queen's Speech (February 5, 1895). Another Evicted Tenants' Bill, Welsh disestablishment, the popular control of the liquor traffic, the abolition of plural voting, and a measure for completing the system of county government in Scotland, all found a place; but of the House of Lords there was no mention. The Government were however right in this omission; the Crown could hardly recommend a resolution of one branch of the Legislature which injuriously affected the other. Tactically also, Lord Rosebery

The Govern-
ment pro-
gramme.

defended his action by explaining that a resolution carrying with it so great a constitutional change would of necessity produce an immediate dissolution; and for this he was not as yet prepared, until he had made some further use of his majority.

There was however quite sufficient ground in the Ministerial silence for a party attack; and an Opposition amendment intrusted to Mr. Chamberlain was moved to the Address, declaring that it was quite contrary to the public interest that the time of Parliament should be occupied in discussing measures which the Ministry was avowedly unable to pass, while a great constitutional question had been announced which required immediate settlement. The party situation was summed up in that amendment. The Opposition was desirous to secure a dissolution; the Ministerialists, at all events the tacticians among them, preferred to let the House of Lords still further discredit itself in the eyes of the electorate by refusing to pass Liberal measures, before calling on the country to decide upon the constitutional change which they had in view. The Ministerial majority, although small, was sufficient to enable them to pursue their own line. The measures promised in the Queen's Speech were accordingly introduced. Against an opposition falling just short of obstruction they were slowly pushed on. No Bill of importance however was destined to arrive at maturity. Although there were occasions, such as the second reading of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, on which the Ministers found themselves in possession of a fair majority, the numbers on which they could rely were so small that their tenure of power was constantly uncertain.

On the question of the election of a new Speaker, when a vote was taken on strict party lines, they secured the election of their candidate by no more than 11 votes. In April Mr. Peel was compelled by ill-health to resign the position he had long held with great dignity and success. All attempts at producing, as is usually thought desirable, a unanimous election to the vacant post proved in vain; and finally a vote was taken between Sir Matthew Ridley, nominated by the Opposition, and Mr. Gully, a comparatively unknown man, who was put forward by the Government. Time has amply vindicated the wisdom of the Government choice.

It was very generally believed, though no certainty in the matter could be arrived at, that the Government, in continuing to press forward their programme, and in avoiding a dissolution which seemed the natural method of strengthening

Weakness of the Ministry.

Contested election of the Speaker.

"Filling the cup."

their position, were acting with the express object of passing measures in the Commons which the House of Lords would be certain to reject; or, in the cant language of the time, were attempting to "fill up the cup," in order that they might be able to appeal to the country with a still stronger cry against the obstruction of the Upper House. There is at least no doubt that the Prime Minister definitely put forward a reform in that House, and a change in its relation to the Lower House, as the first future object of the Liberal party. Party tactics of this sort are neither dignified nor safe. An accident may easily change a small majority into a minority; and so it now fell out. On the discussion of the expenses of the War Office, Mr. Brodrick moved a slight diminution, on the ground that the supply of cordite was insufficient. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman replied that the experts whom he had consulted had expressed themselves satisfied. He unfortunately compromised his position by naming the exact amount in store. By so doing he rendered his appeal to expert authority nugatory; the House could now judge for itself, and, somewhat to the astonishment of both parties, the Government upon a division appeared in the minority, 125 against 132. The House at once adjourned, and on the following day, the 22d of June, it was known that the Government had resigned, and that Lord Salisbury had been called upon to form a Ministry. Thus upon a small side issue the Conservative Government were returned to power; and during the remainder of the reign were able to continue in office, supported in part by the natural reaction which followed the long course of Liberal advance, in part by the political blindness which invariably attends a state of war.

The Parliament was dissolved on the 8th of July. The general election which ensued consummated the rout of the Liberal party. It was in vain that Lord Rosebery, following in the lines of Mr. Gladstone's last speech, attempted to rally his followers to a great attack upon the House of Lords. The party was out of hand; its vast and diffuse programme militated against concentrated effort; no enthusiasm was evoked by the attitude of the leader; the dominating personality of Mr. Gladstone was no longer there to unite jarring opinions. The result was a crushing defeat. The Unionist Ministry could command a majority of 152 in the new Parliament. In no Parliament since that which immediately followed the great Reform Bill had either party been in a position of such complete predominance.

Resignation of the Ministry.

General election.

CHAPTER VII.

LORD SALISBURY'S MINISTRY, June 24, 1895.

<i>Premier,</i>	Lord Salisbury.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer,</i>	Sir M. Hicks-Beach.
<i>Lord Chancellor,</i>	Lord Halsbury.
<i>First Lord of the Treasury,</i>	Mr. A. Balfour.
<i>President of the Council,</i>	Duke of Devonshire.
<i>Lord Privy Seal,</i>	Lord Cross.
"	Lord Salisbury (Nov. 1900).
<i>Secretary for India,</i>	Lord George Hamilton.
<i>Home Secretary,</i>	Sir Matthew Ridley.
"	Mr. Ritchie (Nov. 1900).
<i>Colonial Secretary,</i>	Mr. Chamberlain.
<i>War Secretary,</i>	Lord Lansdowne.
"	Mr. Brodrick (Nov. 1900).
<i>Foreign Secretary,</i>	Lord Salisbury.
"	Lord Lansdowne (Nov. 1900).
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty,</i>	Mr. Goschen.
"	Lord Selborne (Nov. 1900).
<i>President of the Board of Trade,</i>	Mr. Ritchie.
"	Mr. G. Balfour (Nov. 1900).
<i>Postmaster-General,</i>	Duke of Norfolk.*
<i>Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,</i>	Lord James.
<i>President of Local Government Board,</i>	Mr. Chaplin.
"	Mr. Long (Nov. 1900).
<i>President of Board of Agriculture,</i>	Mr. Long.
"	Mr. Hanbury (Nov. 1900).
<i>First Commissioner of Works,</i>	Mr. Akers Douglas.
<i>President of Educational Council,</i>	Sir John Gorst.*
<i>Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,</i>	Earl of Cadogan.
<i>Chief Secretary for Ireland,</i>	Mr. Gerald Balfour.*
"	Mr. Wyndham (Nov. 1900).*
<i>Lord Chancellor for Ireland,</i>	Lord Ashbourne.
<i>Secretary for Scotland,</i>	Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

* Not in the Cabinet.

THE withdrawal of Mr. Gladstone from the political arena, and the rapid disappearance of the Liberal Ministry of which he had been the head, produced a complete change in the centre of political interest. It was no longer the Irish question on which party warfare hinged. Though it no doubt continued to occupy a place of great prominence, serving as a permanent obstacle to any reunion of the Liberal party, yet, as far as the nation was concerned, it now gave place to questions of more domestic interest, and before all to the question of imperial unity.

The imperial idea was the monopoly of neither party. The late Prime Minister had long preached it, though it had appeared to him scarcely within the realm of practical politics. Among the Conservatives into whose hands the Government had now so triumphantly passed, it found an eager supporter in Mr. Chamberlain, a man in intellectual power perhaps not superior to Lord Rosebery, but of a more practical and self-confident disposition, and of unrivalled tenacity in pursuing to success whatever objects he set before him. Few men have excited more political animosity. His bitter speech, his apparent tergiversations, the outspoken character of his utterances, and the little respect which he showed for the ordinary conventions of political life, afforded constant openings for attack. But an unbiassed consideration of his whole chequered career leads to the conclusion that there was a certain breadth of view, an aim wider and higher than the detail he was for the moment handling, always present with him at every stage of his life. Whether engaged in municipal work at Birmingham, or supporting the views of the Democratic Radical, or turning upon his old friends and withstanding with all his might what he regarded as a step towards the dissolution of the empire, it was always the great idea of well-governed yet self-governed units within an unbroken and powerful unity which filled his mind. To all appearance a practical, sharp, even over sharp, man of business, he was at heart an idealist. His position as Colonial Secretary gave him opportunities he was not slow to embrace. The establishment of the Australian Commonwealth, and the South African War, with its attendant incidents, afford striking instances of the successful realisation of his idea. As Colonial Minister, he shared with Lord Salisbury (who retained the Foreign Office in his hands) the direction of the external policy of England, which, from the first moment of the accession to office of the new Ministry, began to absorb the public attention.

In fact, Mr. Chamberlain had hardly taken possession of his office before his treatment of a difficulty which arose in West Ashanti War, 1896. Africa gave proof of the masterful temper in which he was likely to carry out his duties. Prempey, King of Ashanti, had fallen out with the British authorities on the Gold Coast Settlement. His slave trading, his human sacrifices, his refusal to complete the payment of the indemnity required after the expedition of 1874, and his vexatious interferences with trade, had called for remonstrance, and the remonstrance had been disregarded and defied. Without hesitation Mr. Chamberlain sent a peremptory ultimatum demanding the

Mr. Chamberlain Colonial Secretary.

Ashanti War, 1896.

establishment of a British protectorate. When the time given for reply elapsed and no answer had been received, he at once ordered troops into the country. On January 17, 1896, Kumasi, Prempey's capital, was occupied without resistance. There was no longer any talk of a Protectorate; the annexation of Ashanti was at once declared. A garrison was left, and the expedition returned triumphantly to the coast. The little war was not without valuable results. In the subsequent disputes, turning as they did upon questions connected with the "hinterland" of this part of Africa, the occupation of Kumasi was of considerable value.

The contrast between the methods of the Colonial Minister and those of Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office was accentuated by the settlement of a difficulty which had arisen with France in Siam. The attempt to form a "buffer State," as it was called, between the possessions of France and England in the Siam peninsula had produced constant friction. With his usual clear perception of the real bearings of the question, Lord Salisbury risked the imputation of neglecting British interests, and made considerable concessions of territory to France, receiving in exchange only a definite frontier and a joint undertaking to respect and uphold so much of Siam as was still left to the King (January 5, 1896). The compensation did not at first sight appear sufficient, and Lord Salisbury's policy met with a good deal of blame. But the definition of the frontier, and the security of Siam from disturbance by further encroachments, were probably well worth the price paid.

The Ministry made its first Parliamentary appearance in the session of 1896. With a few internal changes, and interrupted only by a general election in 1900, it lasted to the end of the reign. It is almost too soon to tell its history. The difficulties already indicated press more and more heavily on the historian. The relative importance of facts and the certainty of conclusions become constantly more questionable. Thus it is impossible to say with any certainty whether or not the Cabinet was guided by any distinct rule of policy in handling what may be spoken of as its administrative legislation. It would however appear that either by stress of circumstances or by the influence direct or indirect of certain strong members of the Cabinet, a striking similarity is to be found in every instance of such legislation. There is always the same anxiety to preserve the appearance of unity, but to admit within the limits of that unity the largest possible amount of decentralisation and local liberty. The same principle is found underlying the general treatment

The Siam difficulty.

Character of the Ministry.

of the imperial question, and the relations of the colonies to the mother country; and scarcely less obviously in the policy pursued by the Government with respect to Ireland, London, and the reorganisation of the national education.

On confronting Parliament, the Ministers found themselves occupying a more difficult position than they had anticipated. They had spread their nets widely at the general election, and had not been sparing in promises to secure success. To more classes than one hopes had been held out. To the Church it had been suggested that assistance was procurable for the denominational schools. The agriculturalist might look for something to help him over the general depression of his business. The workman was to receive compensation for injuries. The Land Law of Ireland was to be improved. Still more attractive was the optimistic opinion with regard to foreign affairs, of which Mr. Curzon had made himself the mouthpiece. The advent of the Conservative Ministry was to change foreign hostility into friendship; and international quarrels, the offspring of the deep-seated distrust felt by foreign Governments in the Liberal party, were to disappear before the confidence which would be inspired by the wisdom and skill of the new Ministry. The many promises had somehow or other, either wholly or in part, to be fulfilled if the Conservative majority was to be maintained. But the absolute and almost laughable contradiction of Mr. Curzon's prophecies by the actual facts seemed to leave but little opening for successful domestic legislation. The list of thorny international questions, which took up the larger part of the Queen's Speech, seemed enough of itself to occupy the whole attention of any Ministry. There were difficulties with France and Siam, Russia and Afghanistan, the United States and Venezuela, Turkey and the Armenians, disturbances in Chitral, the Ashanti War, and the Jameson Raid, with the accompanying complication caused by the sympathetic telegram sent to Mr. Kruger by the impulsive German Emperor. Yet before the Parliament came to an end in 1900 the Ministry had in some degree fulfilled most of their promises. It was however a work of time, and was only rendered possible by the lengthened existence which good fortune secured to them. An overflowing revenue and the unusual excitement of a popular war carried them triumphantly through their difficulties.

During the first session everything seemed to be going wrong. The Education Bill had to be withdrawn, the Workmen's Compensation Bill was not even proposed, the Irish Land Bill threatened to break up the party, the

Failure of the Education Bill, May 1896.

Ministerial promises.

Agricultural Rating Bill was so manifestly "a special dole to a class" that it met with a very grudging reception. The Education Bill, the great failure of the session, was introduced by Sir John Gorst just before Easter, postponed apparently to allow the Ministers time to make up their own minds upon it. Their unanimity in fact was limited to one point, they desired to give assistance to those schools which had hitherto depended chiefly on voluntary subscriptions. The compromise effected by Mr. Forster's Bill of 1870 had not been palatable to the clergy. They had found themselves, as they believed, engaged in an unfair competition with the Board schools which could draw upon the bottomless purse of the rates, while they themselves depended upon the uncertain liberality of subscribers. At all events, it appeared unquestionable that the voluntary schools were not equal in excellence to the rate-supported schools, and many of them were only just able to fulfil the minimum requirements of the Educational Department. Instead however of pursuing in some simple method the object they had in view, the Government listened to the voice of those who had wider interests in education, and took the opportunity of linking their simple object to a great system of educational reform. Whether their plan was good or not, there can be no question that it was produced prematurely and without sufficiently securing the support of those chiefly interested in so highly contentious a measure. On moving the second reading, Sir John Gorst explained that the objects of the Bill were four: the raising of the poorer schools, whether they were voluntary or Board, to a level with their richer neighbours; the replacement of Church schools in rural districts where School Boards had been tried and failed; the establishment of a common authority for both primary and secondary schools, so that the two systems might be co-ordinated; and decentralisation of the existing system, so that the Educational Department might be relieved and greater elasticity be secured. The means by which these objects were to be secured was the establishment in every county, or county borough, of a general educational authority. This was to be the County Council acting through a committee created by itself, and in accordance with its views, and consisting of a majority of county councillors, the other members being either experts or representatives of educational bodies. The administration of the imperial grant was to be placed in its hands, and also the money received under the Local Taxation Act, commonly known as the spirit money. It was also to have the charge of technical instruction, industrial and

reformatory schools; and, with regard to secondary education, it might aid and establish new schools and take over the higher grade schools of the School Board. With respect to the grant, it was to be given in part as a special aid to necessitous Church schools, which were to receive from the Exchequer 4s. for every child in regular attendance. The limit of 17s. 6d. per child hitherto set to the grant from all sources was removed; and all elementary schools were exempted from the payment of rates. The age of school attendance was to be raised to 12 years. Finally, what Sir John Gorst described as a supplement to the conscience clause was introduced. If a reasonable number of parents required to have separate religious instruction given to their children, it was to be the duty of the managers to make arrangements for such instruction. In most respects the Bill was closely similar to the one which was subsequently (1903) passed. But it was so full of matters on which opinion might differ, it was so complete a revolution of the whole existing system, the security which it offered for the additional assistance of voluntary schools seemed so uncertain, the importation of sectarian religious teaching was so objectionable to many minds, that, even granting the acceptance of the fundamental principles, there still remained an infinite field of discussion. Nothing but the clearest comprehension and approval of the details, and a determined and whole-hearted support of them in Committee, could have carried the Bill successfully through the House. This comprehension and determination were notably wanting. The Government and its majority were by no means completely agreed; a hopeless confusion consequently arose, and the Government found it necessary to withdraw the Bill in a somewhat humiliating manner.

At all events they learnt wisdom by experience, and in the following session (January 19, 1897) they introduced a much simpler Bill, known as the Voluntary Schools Act. All schools were relieved from local rates, the 17s. 6d. limit was abolished, and an aggregate grant of 5s. per child was given to the voluntary schools. The distribution of this grant was left in the hands of the Educational Department, which was still to insist on the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions. The Bill very naturally created a bitter feeling, among Nonconformists who saw public money given to the support of Church schools, and among those constitutionalists who considered public control necessary where public money was concerned. However, by a somewhat profuse use of the closure, the Bill was forced through the House (March 25, 1897). The only

Voluntary
Schools Act.
March 1897.

success on the part of the Opposition was the provision of a corresponding relief to necessitous Board Schools, which was secured by a separate Bill.

But although the Government had thus obtained the one point on which they were really bent, and had abandoned for the time the attempt at general legislation, the futile Bill of 1896 had not been without its importance. It was, though incomplete and unsuccessful, the expression of a feeling profoundly felt that the whole educational system required reorganisation. More elasticity in its lower branches, a greater opportunity for fitly supplying the very varying wants of different classes and different localities, a clearer definition of primary and secondary education, and the bringing of both into one co-ordinated system, were objects which not only educational experts, but all who were interested in the intellectual well-being of the people, were beginning to recognise as essential. It was felt that England was falling behind in intellectual progress, and in that scientific equipment on which pre-eminence in the keen competition of the world must ultimately rest. There might be many ways of obtaining the required results, and the contests of systems might be severe. But the Government was henceforward compelled to undertake the responsibility of deciding upon the most desirable plan, and of producing a measure which should satisfy the public demand. The plan was not produced until a new reign had begun; but tentative steps were taken, the direction of the proposed reform was clearly indicated, and the ground prepared for the final measure.

Thus in 1899 a Bill establishing a Board of Education was passed. It created a Board consisting of a President, and the Lord President of the Council, the principal Secretaries of State, the First Lord of the Treasury, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. To this Board was handed over the work hitherto done by the Educational Department and the Department of Science and Art. A consultative committee was called into existence to advise the Board and to arrange for a register of teachers. The Board was authorised to inspect secondary schools in England. By this measure a long step was taken towards bringing primary and secondary education, including its technical branch, under one central power. The intermediate apparatus, the local authority, had still to be supplied. Another step in the right direction was taken when a Bill, brought in not by Government but by Mr. Robson a private member, raised the age from eleven to twelve as the earliest

General desire
to improve
education.

Board of
Education Act,
1899.

at which a child could leave school. In country districts the authority was allowed to fix even a higher age, with the proviso that between the age of eleven and thirteen only a limited number of attendances should be required.

It had been understood that the Government was pledged to introduce various improvements of a social character. The condition of the agricultural labourers had formed one of the topics of the Queen's Speech in 1896, and promises of relief had been held out. Nearly £1,000,000 was devoted to the purpose. It was distributed in the form of a grant in aid of the rates. Land was to be assessed not upon its whole rateable value. There was really no reason to believe that the agricultural classes alone suffered from injustice of rating. The proposal of the Government was in fact as the Opposition declared it to be, "a dole to the landed interest." It was after all a very small relief, not more than a shilling an acre; it was entirely indiscriminate, to the advantage of the rich farmer as well as to the needy. As Lord Rosebery insisted, it was the rent rather than the rates which should have been diminished; but such an argument in the House of Lords was not likely to carry weight. The Government pushed the Bill through, limiting its operation to five years, and followed it up with a commission of inquiry on local taxation, which should to all appearance more properly have preceded it. The gift to the Church schools had been severely censured as an instance of class legislation. It is difficult to regard the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896 in any other light. Several small measures for the amelioration of the working-classes were also passed; such as the Bill facilitating the purchase by the occupier of houses under the value of £400, and the Bill allowing municipal authorities to establish lodging-houses for the poor outside their boundaries, a tentative measure for relieving the ever-increasing pressure upon the centre of towns, but no large plan of improvement was set on foot.

The only important legislation of a social character was the Workmen's Compensation Bill. The mismanagement of the first session did not allow of its introduction; but in 1897 a Bill was brought in and passed. It was somewhat limited in extent, although fairly complete within those limits. Agricultural labourers, seamen, domestic servants, and workshops carried on without machinery were excluded from its action. In cases to which it applied, if accident caused a workman's death, his representatives could claim three years' wages, or £150, whichever

Agricultural
Rating Bill,
1896.

Workmen's
Compensation
Bill, 1897.

was the larger, up to £300. In case of incapacity caused by accident, the workman was to obtain half his wages if less than £1 weekly. The exclusion of so many classes roused much opposition, and eventually, in 1900, the Government so far altered their plan as to admit agricultural labourers. But the point in the Bill which was perhaps most warmly contested was the right given to the workman to make an arrangement with his employer by which he was excluded from the advantages of the Act. The great companies had schemes of their own for compensation which they believed fostered thrift and good feeling between employer and employed. The work of the great Friendly Societies had proved most valuable; and the Government, pledged by its very character to preserve rather than to reform, thought it undesirable to interfere in any way with such useful agencies. The right of "contracting out" formed therefore a part of the Bill, subject to the condition that the Friendly Society or scheme to which the workman so contracting out belonged must be certified by the Registrar of the Friendly Societies, as offering terms not less favourable than those secured by the Act. The Opposition on the other hand had on previous occasions refused to allow this freedom to the workmen, in the belief that any scheme of compensation unless universally obligatory would be inoperative in the hands of unscrupulous employers. In spite however of strong opposition, and of a wealth of friendly amendments which threatened to stifle it, the Bill passed through Committee with its chief principles unaltered, and became law.

Government of
London Bill,
1899.

The anomalous character of the government of London was another point which called for immediate attention. In creating the County Council and concentrating in its hands the administrative powers exercised by the various Boards in the Metropolis, true to their Conservative instincts the Ministry of 1888 had excluded the City from its jurisdiction. There were thus two distinct centres of authority, the old Corporation and the new County Council. This state of things was regarded as so undesirable that a strong feeling in favour of a junction of the two powers was prevalent, in spite of the obstacles to amalgamation presented by the antiquity and importance of the Corporation. On the other hand, it can scarcely be questioned that the County Council was becoming more powerful than the Government liked. Its majority was constantly Progressive, and the somewhat curious phenomenon was seen of an area returning a considerable majority of Unionist members to Parliament, yet represented in its local Council by men whose action exhibited strong democratic tendencies. To increase still further

the power of the County Council by amalgamating it with the City did not fall in with the Ministerial views; and the London Government Bill, one of the most important measures of the session of 1899, was conceived in that spirit of decentralisation which had already been shown elsewhere. The City of London remained intact with all its powers and privileges; the vast area over which the County Council exercised authority was broken up into municipalities or boroughs. Of these, sixteen were created at once, and arrangements made for the admission of others if demanded by circumstances. It seems difficult to regard it as a Bill for securing the unity of the government of London; for except in the last resort, the municipalities enjoyed almost complete independence. They had their mayor, their aldermen and councillors; no representatives of the central authority sat in their Council; they were at liberty to promote or oppose Bills in Parliament. Many alterations were admitted during the Committee stage; and on the question of the admission of women to the Councils there was much warm debate. The amendments on this point passed in the Commons were negatived in the Lords. To save the Bill, Mr. Balfour advised the acceptance of the Lords' amendments, and women were entirely excluded from the new machinery.

It was a period of ever-increasing revenue met by ever-increasing expenditure. The figures of the Budget had assumed a somewhat alarming appearance, when they rose to more than £100,000,000. The surplus however year by year seemed to justify the expenditure. Thus in 1896 the surplus amounted to £4,210,000; in 1897 to £1,660,000; in 1898 to £3,678,000; and in 1899 the result would have been equally satisfactory had it not been for the outbreak of the South African war. The wealth in the hands of Government enabled them to carry further that part of their policy which consisted in largely increasing the naval and military forces. It was not a policy belonging to any single party, at least as far as the navy was concerned.

Ever since the Naval Defence Act of 1889 it had been generally accepted that no reasonable expense must be spared to supply adequately the chief defensive power of the country. Since the production by Lord Spencer in 1894 of his shipbuilding programme, rapid progress had been made. It was now proposed by Mr. Goschen to add to the 105 ships and 62 torpedo boats already built 5 more battleships, 4 first-class, 3 second-class, and 6 third-class cruisers, and 28 torpedo boats. The cost would be about £10,000,000, spread over three years. At the same time the navy

Prosperous
finances.

Increase of the
Navy.

estimates were increased by £3,000,000, and reached the figure of £21,800,000. Besides this, by the Naval Works Bill the £8,500,000 which had been devoted to harbour defence in the preceding year was increased to £14,000,000. Great though the expenditure was, the proposition was well received both in the House and in the country. No new taxation was necessary, and the nation regarded with complacency the expenditure of no less than £55,000,000 upon its favourite force since Lord Spencer had put out his programme.

Although it may be said to have become a received opinion that the position of Great Britain among the nations of the world was to depend on its naval preponderance, the reorganisation and improvement of the army was not neglected. Though there could be no attempt to rival the great military powers of Europe, the extension of the empire gave constant employment to the army, and it was at all events desirable that, even though small, the army should be complete. Immediately on their accession to office the Government had taken advantage of the resignation of the Duke of Cambridge to introduce considerable changes in the War Office. Lord Wolseley was made Commander-in-Chief, with a military Board and consultative Council, the responsibility being centred in the Secretary for War. The limited power placed in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief, and the removal of much of his responsibility, subjected the plan to keen criticism. But the Government had their way. In their second session some £7,000,000 were, by the Military Works Act, and the Military Manœuvres Act, provided for the establishment of military ports and fortified harbours, and for the purchase of a large tract of country on Salisbury Plain to be set aside for manœuvres. A slight addition was also made to the total estimates of the year, but it was very slight. The expenditure upon the military and naval forces and the reorganisation of the War Office represented the general feeling both of the Government and the nation as to the national requirements during a time of peace, in the profound belief that the present peaceful condition of the empire would remain undisturbed. The greatness of the empire was recognised, the demands upon its defensive power by the colonies were understood, and, as it was believed, answered by the naval preparations. For frontier wars, and acquisitions in barbarous countries, the army was considered large enough.

The year 1899 produced a rude awakening. The special autumn session called to provide for the sudden outbreak of the South African war saw the beginning of that

Reorganisa-
tion of the War
Office.

Expenses of the
Boer War.

enormous expenditure upon the army which has added £150,000,000 to the National Debt. The beginning was small, for the fatal ignorance of the Government, their ridiculous misapprehension of the struggle in which they had engaged, had not as yet been proved. £10,000,000 it was thought would be sufficient, which might be readily supplied by a temporary loan. The War Office was indeed quite proud of the comparative speed with which it despatched a single army corps to the support of the slender armaments it had as yet thought right to send. As far as the movement of that army corps went, they were perhaps justified. The troops were landed in Africa rapidly and without mishap, though not without some signs of mismanagement. But no sooner did the war really begin than the insufficiency both of the English armament and organisation became evident. The call upon the nation was cheerfully responded to, the Yeomanry and Volunteers were organised. The colonies showed a keen comprehension of the imperial interests involved, and at once came forward with offers, and although at first they were told that infantry alone were wanted, in the course of a few months they were supplying some of the best of our mounted troops. The War Office had begun to see its mistakes. The British artillery was outraged; the rapidly moving horsemen and marksmen of the enemy were filling the prisons of Pretoria with English infantry. Then began an unchecked and lavish expenditure of money. Guns were bought even in Germany; horses, irrespective of their excellence, were swept in from all corners of the earth to be used and destroyed before they could become acclimatised. Soldiers unfit for service were hurried to the front. It seemed to be thought that mere numbers and unlimited money were all that was required to establish British supremacy. Though the war ended successfully, the Government and the War Office can scarcely claim credit, unless it be for the spark of wisdom which induced them to choose Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener to retrieve the disastrous beginning of the war.

A part of the general imperial policy which the Government followed, and which seems to have been an attempt to form under the Crown a body of federated self-governing States, was the completion of federative arrangements among the various small States into which our colonies in their process of growth had formed themselves. With the Dominion of Canada as an example, the various Australian colonies were encouraged to come to a federative arrangement among themselves, and it was not obscurely indicated that a process of the same sort would be very desirable

The imperial
policy.

sooner or later in South Africa. In Australia the attempt was crowned with success. England had really very little to do with it, the Federation was the work of the colonial statesmen. It is plain that such an idea of empire is full of difficulties. It is impossible to suppose that great self-governing clusters of colonies, allowed and encouraged to form themselves into what have all the appearance of independent States, would admit of much active interference or supervision from the mother country. Reciprocal advantages in the connection are still to seek, and the great difficulty, as far as England is concerned, is to retain any link of union except the sentimental one afforded by the person of the monarch. And so it proved with respect to Australia.

For a good many years attempts had been made by certain statesmen in Australia to bring about a federation of the colonies, an idea which had been fostered by the Colonial Office at home. The mutual jealousies of the various colonies had made it a matter of considerable difficulty to bring them to any common ground of union. Still greater was the difficulty when the question of federation with the mother country and participation of some sort in the administration of the empire was introduced into the discussion. Until the outbreak of the Boer war gave occasion for a hearty and unexpected exhibition of imperial loyalty, the most striking indication of its existence was found in the great Jubilee celebration of the sixtieth year of the Queen's reign in 1897. At the great festivals which accompanied it there had been collected representatives from all parts of the empire. Independent princes and protected princes from India had crowded to do homage to their suzerain. Self-governing and Crown colonies had joined in demonstrations of respect for their Queen. Mr. Chamberlain took advantage of the opportunity, and succeeded in bringing together in London all the Prime Ministers of the Australian colonies. A series of conferences was held, in which the great questions which had to be solved were discussed, not only with a view to local federation, but in relation to some wider scheme of imperial unity. He carefully refrained from defining any such scheme. He indicated the possibility of a zollverein or common tariff for the whole empire, the possibility of some central representative council, and the probable necessity of some distribution of the great burdens of empire. But he appears to have given the colonial Ministers clearly to understand that the work was theirs and not his, that it lay with them to bring about their own federation and to smooth their own intercolonial difficulties, intimating at the same

Efforts at
federation.

time that, when that was accomplished, the English Government would be ready to lend a sympathetic ear to any request for closer union. The Ministers returned without having advanced much further than before in their scheme of federation; but undoubtedly the conferences were not without effect. Before long Bills were passed in all the Australian Parliaments authorising federation; and after much intricate negotiation and many conferences, a scheme was arrived at and accepted in Australia subject to its approval by the Colonial Office in England.

The difficulty of finding a link with the mother country, which has already been mentioned, was at once apparent. In constituting themselves into a great commonwealth, the Australian colonies had no idea of allowing the practical independence they enjoyed to be overshadowed by the Home Government. The plan established a Federal Parliament, with a Senate formed by six senators from each State, and a House of Representatives elected in proportion to the population of the State. To the House of Representatives was left the power of the purse. The powers intrusted to the Federal Parliament were carefully defined. Free trade within the Commonwealth, common public services, uniform law, were definite parts of the scheme. The Constitution was completed and the junction with England secured by the appointment by the Queen of a Governor-General who was to be her representative; and this, in the draft scheme which was approved in Australia by the use of the Referendum, was in fact the only point of union. The right of appeal to the Queen in Council in any matter involving the interpretation of the constitution, or of the constitution of a State, unless the public interests of some part of her Majesty's dominion other than the Commonwealth or a single State were involved, was done away with. The connecting link therefore between the judicature of the colonies and the mother country was broken, and there seemed no security remaining for the uniformity of law within the empire. Upon this point there was a sharp struggle. Eventually a compromise was accepted, and the right of appeal to the Privy Council was allowed, if the cases brought to its cognizance were certified by the High Court of the Commonwealth as fitting subjects for its jurisdiction. With this alteration the Act was passed, and the Commonwealth was established by a proclamation issued by the Queen from Balmoral (September 17, 1900).

After the intense excitement which had attended the Home Rule Bills, and the constant recurrence of the Irish difficulty in an

Foundation of
the Australian
Common-
wealth.

aggravated form during the last twenty years, the small part it played in Lord Salisbury's last Ministry is somewhat surprising. This is said to be partly due to the sympathetic management of Mr. Morley during his tenure of office; but its continuance may more probably be traced to good seasons and commercial prosperity, to the overwhelming majority of the Unionists which deprived the Irish party in Parliament of much of its political importance, to the quarrels which broke up that party after the death of Mr. Parnell, and to a certain measure of success which attended the efforts of Government to secure the well-being of the people. It is remarkable that there had been for some years an unbroken growth in the deposits in the Irish savings banks. They had steadily increased from £4,710,000 in 1886 to £7,678,000 by the end of 1895. Two good harvests had also tended to the lessening of political discontent. The Unionist Ministry had therefore a fair field on which to try their new policy. They were moreover compelled, in this as in other respects, to make large concessions to the Liberal section whose adherence had secured their majority. Not only were measures taken which touched in various directions the comfort and wealth of the Irish, but legislation on Liberal lines, and indeed closely resembling that of their predecessors, though with certain modifications, was introduced.

The Land Law Bill which was passed in 1896 followed in many respects very exactly the Bill Mr. Morley had failed to pass in the preceding year. Its avowed object was to amend the legislation of 1881, and it consisted largely of alterations of a technical character in the procedure of the Land Commission in fixing rent. Mr. Morley had produced his measure because the first term of fifteen years was drawing to a close, and it had become necessary to fix the rents for another term of years; and before this was done he was desirous that the position of the tenant, more especially with respect to his interest in his own improvements, should be secured. The object of Mr. Gerald Balfour's Bill was practically the same as that of Mr. Morley. Several of the proposals in the previous Bill were accepted as non-contentious. On the other hand, there were others which were considerably modified. Thus the shortening of the statutory term during which the rent was to remain fixed was disallowed, and more restriction was placed upon the definition of "improvements." Further provisions for the extension and improvement of the Land Purchase Act of 1891 was also included. The object of that Act had been to increase the advances made by the imperial Government to aid the creation of a peasant

Peace in
Ireland.

Land Bill of
1896.

proprietorship. But while adding to the sum which could be advanced, the Conservative Government of the time appears to have been afraid of its too rapid employment; and the simplicity of the Ashbourne Act had been destroyed by complicated enactments. The effect had been to check more than was at all desirable the process which they regarded as the chief remedy for Irish discomfort. By the Ashbourne Act the tenant repaid the advance by an unvarying instalment at 4 per cent. for forty-nine years. By the Act of 1891 he repaid it in the same time, but by varying and uncertain instalments depending upon various highly technical arrangements. By the present Act the tenant was to pay for ten years a maximum instalment at the rate of 4 per cent.; part of this was interest, part was replacing of capital. At the end of ten years so much of the capital as had been replaced was to be deducted from the sum on which interest was paid. The whole instalment would therefore decrease; for while the replacement continued the same, the interest became less. It was calculated that by this arrangement about sixty-nine years would be required before the instalments would cease. Though the length of time over which the repayment was spread was likely to act as a deterrent to purchase, the certain maximum and the steady decrease were distinct advantages. It was not however upon the purchase clauses that any difficulty arose. Although considerably modified as compared with those of the 1895 Bill, the clauses in favour of the tenant appeared to the landlords still to be serious encroachments on their already diminished rights; and not unnaturally they were deeply disappointed at what they considered the ill-treatment meted out to them by their own friends. Mr. Balfour could not shut his eyes to their threatened opposition, or to the obvious danger that they might find opportunity in the House of Lords of wrecking the Bill altogether. He therefore inserted several amendments in their favour while the Bill was in Committee. The effect of these changes upon the Irish Nationalists was immediate. The split among them was for the moment healed in a general and eager opposition to the Bill. It became only too clear that a Bill which had been intended as a message of peace would have to be forced through the House in the teeth of a united Irish party. This would have been so entirely opposed to the avowed policy of the Government of "killing Home Rule by kindness," that a fresh change of face was made; the new amendments were withdrawn, and the landlords, left in the lurch, could again complain that the provisions with respect to tenants' improvements "reduced their land to prairie value." Joining their forces with the Nationalists, they succeeded in

putting the Government in a minority on one point of no great importance. Their success was but momentary; the Government majority was too strong to be resisted even when weakened by this defection, and the Land Bill got through the Commons (July 29).

In the Upper House the landlords found more room for opposition. Led by Lord Londonderry, they contrived to defeat the Government on more than one clause, though still declaring that they had no intention of destroying the Bill. Amendments were introduced, to which the Commons, when the Bill came back to them, refused to agree. The rebel Lords however had no wish to drive measures to extremity. They withdrew their opposition, contented themselves with expressing their strong dislike to the Bill, and allowed it to pass, on the last day of the session, August 13, 1896.

More important, and still more characteristic of the policy of Government, was the legislation of 1898 and 1899. Immediately after the Address in 1898, Mr. Gerald Balfour introduced what was to be the great measure of the session, the extension of Local Government to Ireland. As in England, County Councils and District Councils and Boards of Guardians were to be established, but not Parish Councils. The members were to be elected on a broad franchise identical with the Parliamentary franchise, except that Peers and women might vote. The County Councils were to take over the duties hitherto performed by the grand juries, except in the matter of criminal law. The District Councils were charged with the work hitherto done by the authorities of the baronies. In respect to finance, the principle of the Agricultural Rating Act was applied to Ireland, and £730,000 a year was to be paid to it out of the imperial exchequer. The occupier was to be relieved of the payment of half the county cess, the owner to be relieved of half the poor rate. In addition to this, £200,000 a year, the products of the local licence duties, and an additional grant of £79,000 were to be given. The result was expected to be that the new authorities would have a surplus of £35,000 after meeting the charges to which they were liable.

The Bill, which was passed without much opposition, had much the appearance of a substitute for Home Rule. This Mr. Balfour declared that it was not. It was introduced, he said, merely as a matter of administrative convenience. However this may be, it undoubtedly put more power in the hands of the Irish and of the Nationalist party. A very small percentage of the old members of the grand jury found seats on the new Councils, which were for the most part constituted

Irish Local
Government
Bill.

of men inexperienced in administrative business. It can afford no cause for surprise that here and there unwise excesses of party feeling were seen, in nothing perhaps more notably than in the violent resolutions passed in not a few of the newly established Councils in favour of the Boers during the South African War. It is more to be wondered at that in a large majority of cases the Councils set to work with an apparent determination to execute their new duties with thoroughness, and on the whole succeeded in so doing. The smoothness with which the new arrangements worked and the general satisfaction which they gave speak highly for Mr. Gerald Balfour's skill.

Words had been dropped in the debate which led to an uneasy feeling that the Local Government Act was intended to be an alternative for other measures of a curative description which had been suggested. This did not prove to be the case. In the following year a new Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Technical Instruction was created for Ireland. The object was to develop the resources of the country and to teach the people how to use them. The first Vice-President was Mr. Horace Plunkett. This appointment was an official recognition of the excellent work he had for some time been carrying on. At his persuasion an Irish Agricultural Organisation Society had been formed, and had pressed upon the people with great success the principles of industrial co-operation. The work had begun in 1897, and had spread with extraordinary rapidity—87 Agricultural Societies, with a membership of 9000, and 155 Dairy Societies, with a membership of 20,000, were under its control by December, 1898. The output of butter between April 1897 and December 1898 was 4000 tons, valued at £353,850. As a part of the same movement, 41 Credit Banks, properly safeguarded, had been established for the benefit of borrowers. By the Act of 1899, the Vice-President was to be *ex officio* member of the Congested Districts Board, and the Department was to take over agriculture, fisheries, and education, under special Acts. An income of about £160,000 a year was secured to it.

A certain pedantry and want of tact obscured the real excellence of much of Mr. Gerald Balfour's administration. Unfortunate words, when speaking of the wants of the people during a time of great distress, excited bitter anger, and he left office (November 1900) without having won any liking from the landlord party, whose interests, as they believed, he had betrayed, or from the people, whose feelings he had

Success of the
Bill.

Irish Agri-
cultural
Department.

not sufficiently considered. It remained for a more gracious personage, Mr. Wyndham, in subsequent years to reap the fruit of Mr. Balfour's work, and so far to ingratiate himself with all classes as apparently to bring within sight a friendly solution to the bitter struggle which had so long torn the unfortunate country.

As in his former administrations, Lord Salisbury had retained the Foreign Office in his own hands. Considering the large Salisbury's foreign policy. crop of foreign questions which immediately, and somewhat unexpectedly, assaulted the Unionist Ministry, this was no doubt fortunate for the country. His sagacious, well-instructed, and peace-loving mind precluded all idea of that aggressive imperialism which had been the dread of former generations of Liberals. His policy of conciliation, stretched as it was sometimes thought even to an extreme, but which was in fact tempered by a very adequate view of the maintenance of British rights, carried the country through great external difficulties, and left the question of empire to be chiefly treated as a domestic question and in the hands of the Colonial Secretary.

Among the many foreign complications which required all Lord Venezuela boundary difficulty. Salisbury's careful handling to unravel, one of the most important was the dispute as to the frontier between Venezuela and British Guiana, a dispute which seemed at one time to threaten a serious quarrel with the United States. The question itself was of long standing, and far from simple. British Guiana had passed to the English from Holland by the Treaty of 1814. The Dutch had obtained this land from Spain, and their possession appears to have been ratified by an extradition treaty between the two countries, signed at Aranjuez in 1791. Had the limits of the country been carefully defined in either of these treaties, no difficulty would have arisen. The English were obviously the possessors of all that the Dutch had possessed, irrespective of any former claims of Spain. It was not until twenty years after the English treaty with Holland that the insurgents of Venezuela had won their independence and formed their Republic. But they assumed the position of being as it were the heirs of the Spaniards, and advanced claims to territories which, though never effectively held, had no doubt belonged to Spain under the well-known Bull by which Pope Alexander VI. at the close of the fifteenth century had partitioned the new world between the Spaniards and Portuguese. But though the occupation of the country south of the Orinoco had been intrusted to the Capuchin Friars, their furthest settlement had advanced but little beyond their starting-point.

From 1836, when the Republic of Venezuela was officially recognised by England, discussions on the boundaries had been repeatedly renewed. In 1840 Sir Robert Schomburgk was employed to define the boundary on geographical lines; but as this was done by the authority of the English Government alone, the definition had not the force of a treaty. In 1850 it was agreed that no occupation of the disputed territory should be permitted by either country, but by extraordinary carelessness the limits of the disputed country were again left undefined. Some years later gold was discovered in the district, and the Venezuelans, disregarding the arrangement of 1850, which seems indeed to have been obeyed by neither party, occupied the land, and, for the purpose of securing the assistance of the United States, made large concessions in it to American citizens. They now raised all their old pretensions, refused to acknowledge the Schomburgk line, and included in their demands country already occupied and administered by England. When the matter was first treated by Lord Salisbury in 1886, he had declared, and had issued a proclamation to that effect, that the English colonists would be assured of protection within the Schomburgk line. It was not however the question of boundary which was really important, but the complication in which it involved England with the United States. It seemed for a moment as though there could be no solution short of war. What is known is the Monroe doctrine lay at the bottom of this entanglement. When the Republics of South America were still young and only half established, it had seemed by no means improbable that the "Holy Alliance" might intervene in favour of the Bourbon monarchy, an event which the United States regarded as disastrous. George Canning, the consistent friend of the new American Republics, suggested that the interference of Europeans with the settlement of America might be regarded as inadmissible. President Monroe took up the theory, and in his presidential address of 1823 formulated it. This doctrine thus The Monroe doctrine. suggested by Canning and adopted by President Monroe in 1823 declared that America would regard any interference on the part of European Powers with the progress or development of the Republican States of South America as an unfriendly act. At first merely an assertion of policy, the words had crystallized in the minds of American politicians into a doctrine with the validity of international law. The shift Government of the small South American Republics saw the advantage which it gave them, and in their constant financial quarrels with European countries from whence their capital was chiefly drawn,

History of the dispute from 1836.

habitually attempted to shelter themselves under the power of the United States.

Thus in the present instance Venezuela succeeded in raising to a very high pitch the anti-English feeling of the ultra-patriotic Americans. President Cleveland and his secretary, Mr. Olney, perhaps shared this feeling; at all events they took advantage of it; and England was astonished to hear words amounting to a serious threat fall from the lips of the President in a formal message to Congress. Both the message and the despatch of the Secretary which preceded it seemed to take it for granted that the English must be wrong, and that their object was the appropriation of other people's territory. Arbitration over the whole matter in dispute was demanded. But as the English Government had already declared itself as to the territory lying within the Schomburgk line, and as the despatch was accompanied with an obvious threat, the difficulty appeared insoluble. Lord Salisbury, after some delay, replied in an able despatch, explaining the Monroe doctrine, and declining arbitration except within definite limits. With great wisdom he avoided an angry rejoinder; he recognised that Mr. Cleveland's demonstration was a political flourish intended to win votes at the approaching Presidential election, and relied on the good sense both of the Americans and English not to press matters to extremity. Nor was he mistaken in his view. The mere chance of war had a disastrous effect on the financial position of America; a monetary crisis and panic occurred, the temper of the people underwent a complete change, and the President's threat proved fatal to his own re-election. Firmness and tact on both sides, and the able management of the question by the English ambassador, Sir Julian Pauncefote, enabled the countries to escape from the apparent dilemma. Nay more, the representatives of the two countries agreed upon a general treaty for submitting all future disputes to arbitration. Though the American Senate at first refused to ratify it, its principles were carried out in the dispute with Venezuela. A Commission and an umpire were appointed, with instructions to settle the boundary, subject only to the limitation that there should be no transference on either side of properties already occupied. Two years later, in October 1899, when the arbitration was completed, it appeared that on nearly every point the English pretensions had been justified. At the same time, American susceptibilities had been saved. The United States had been allowed to appear as mediator, and as the whole of the British demands had not been granted, it was possible for the Americans to believe that their interference had not been useless.

Lord Salisbury's able management.

The heritage of difficulties laid upon Lord Salisbury was not confined to the West. On entering office he had found the affairs of Turkey and the East in a condition so critical that war seemed scarcely to be avoided. In 1894 all Europe had been shocked by terrible stories of Turkish atrocities in Armenia. A quarrel between the Armenians and Kurds in the mountains south of Erzeroum had ripened, after the arrival of Turkish troops, into a ruthless attack upon the Armenian inhabitants of the plain, and their destruction under circumstances of extreme barbarity. Stories of the most revolting cruelty, possibly somewhat exaggerated, came to the ears of Sir Philip Currie, the English ambassador at Constantinople. He at once remonstrated strongly with the Sultan, and received the hearty support of Lord Kimberley, then Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Sultan however took up the position which he maintained throughout the quarrel; that, just as the countries in Europe found it necessary to take measures against anarchists and Socialists, so he was obliged to repress the Armenians who were threatening his State with revolution; but he consented to set on foot the semblance of an inquiry, with the result that the massacres were absolutely denied. Totally disbelieving this denial, Lord Kimberley considered it his duty to attempt to give some reality to the article of the Berlin Treaty of 1878, by which the Porte had promised to carry into effect without delay such reforms as were required in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians. For this purpose he called to fresh life the concert of Europe, and invited all the great Powers to co-operate with him in forcing reforms upon the Porte. Russia and France alone took an active part in the movement; Germany and Austria, though consenting, stood aloof. A new Commission of Inquiry, issued under pressure and including representatives of the European Powers, failed to make a satisfactory report. It was indeed obvious that the Turkish members of the Commission were determined to make the inquiry nugatory. Enough however transpired to enable the European representatives to assure their Governments that there had been no insurrection for the Turkish troops to suppress, and that their employment in support of the Kurds had been accompanied with atrocious cruelty.

The very *raison d'être* of the concert was the mutual jealousy of the Powers and their fear that the Eastern question might precipitate a great European convulsion, and it was impossible to expect any vigorous action from such an alliance. As this was quite evident to the Sultan, he could afford to regard their threats as idle thunder. He took no step to restore order in Armenia, and the massacres continued, spreading

Armenian atrocities, 1894.

ever wider and wider among the provinces of Asia Minor. Lord Kimberley did his best. With the aid of Sir Philip Currie a scheme of reform, admitting Christians to a considerable share in the local administration, was drawn up and approved by the Powers. But the Sultan showed no intention of accepting the scheme or even of replying to their demand that it should be accepted. The anger of the English people was roused. Lord Kimberley began to lose patience; he went so far as to tell the Russian ambassador in England that "further delay would compel him to have recourse to methods of restraint." This was too much for the Russian Minister, Prince Lobanoff, who was already alarmed lest the infection of revolution should make its way among the Armenians dwelling in Russian territory. Either really dreading or pretending to dread the formation of a privileged and self-governing nationality in the heart of Asia Minor, he now declared that nothing would induce Russia to join in such active measures of compulsion as were implied in Lord Kimberley's words. Against such divided opponents the Sultan felt himself strong. His answer, which was received on the 3d of June, could be regarded as nothing less than an absolute refusal of the scheme of reform.

England now stood to all intents and purposes alone. Russia would give no active assistance; France was certain to follow in the wake of Russia; while both Germany and Austria were determined not to risk a disturbance which might bring on a European war. Lord Kimberley however stood firm; he declared that, either with or without the other Powers, the English Government could not repudiate the duty laid upon them by the Berlin Treaty. He even ventured to propose an ultimatum, and to seek once more, though it must have been without hope, for the co-operation of the other Powers. Prince Lobanoff appeared to agree, but declared that it was at all events necessary to refer the proposal for the consideration of the Czar.

While this measure was still under discussion, the wholly unexpected and trivial vote in the English House of Commons with respect to the supply of cordite produced a Ministerial crisis, and obliged the energetic Minister to leave the unfinished question in the hands of his successor. It seems certain that but for that curious incident England would have entered single-handed upon the task of bringing the Porte to reason; and, considering the lukewarm attitude of Russia, it is unlikely that the Porte would have yielded, at any rate without a severe struggle.

Lord Salisbury, who took up the quarrel at this critical moment, was

Lord Kimberley's efforts, 1895.

Change of Ministry, July 1895.

a statesman of the old school, believing in the powers of diplomacy, and that the first duty of that art was the avoidance of war. Entirely devoid of sentiment, cynical and somewhat fatalistic in his views, he was not gravely touched by the condition of the Armenians, and certainly regarded their sufferings as an evil not to be compared in magnitude with that of a great European war. The backbone of his policy was the maintenance of that agreement between the Powers which appeared to be on the point of dissolution. There was no necessity for hurried action; the circumstances of his unexpected restoration to office afforded very valid reasons for delay. While therefore he declared generally that he accepted the action of the late Government, he proceeded as a first step to attempt the repair of the broken concert. His great authority, and the esteem in which he was held as a European statesman, enabled him to succeed where Lord Kimberley had failed. It was thus with the joint weight of the three great Powers that the reforms were again pressed upon the Sultan. But it soon became evident that this co-operation was only temporary, and that it could only be purchased at the price of inaction; for when once more an answer was returned from the Porte, yielding indeed on some small points, but entirely ignoring the real principles of the scheme, Lord Salisbury found himself in the selfsame dilemma as Lord Kimberley. Again the choice was presented of attempting single-handed compulsion, or of adopting a patient diplomacy which was likely enough to end in defeat. He accepted the latter alternative, and for a moment it seemed as if his patience was to be rewarded. He devised a new scheme, the prominent feature of which was a mixed commission of Europeans and Turks charged with the duty of watching the Government in the disturbed districts. The Sultan liked this scheme even less than that of Lord Kimberley, but finding that the Powers were unanimous in urging it upon him, he eluded the necessity of accepting it by issuing a reform scheme of his own, which ostensibly secured to the Christians a considerable share of self-government.

It appeared at the time to be a complete diplomatic triumph. But Lord Salisbury was not deceived; he recognised the difference between words and deeds, and it was in reference to these very promises that he uttered a gloomy and even threatening speech at Guildhall on the 9th of November. "While I readily admit," he said, "that it is quite possible for the Sultan of Turkey, if he will, to govern all his subjects in justice and in peace, he is not exempt more than any other potentate from the law that injustice will bring the highest on

Lord Salisbury's diplomacy.

earth to ruin." The mistrust thus expressed drew a letter from the Sultan, almost pathetic in its terms, declaring his honest intentions. Yet the Prime Minister's incredulity was fully justified. Even at this

The massacres continue. very time frightful massacres were occurring wherever Armenians or Christians were in any numbers. The

stories are far too terrible and too numerous to be given; 400 Armenians killed at Erzeroum, 1300 at Bipert, 200 villages sacked in the neighbourhood of Van, 1100 Christians murdered with every circumstance of wickedness in the town of Diarbekir; such were the reports which were constantly arriving. On the whole, it is said that 25,000 lost their lives in this year, and this, not in wild uproars, but by more or less organised attacks of Turkish soldiers, and by the connivance of Turkish officials.

Remonstrance was unavailing; the same answer was always ready, that the Armenians were anarchical conspirators, and that the anger of the loyal Mussulman was roused beyond restraint by the meddling support afforded by the Christian Powers to their co-religionists. Single-handed, England could do nothing; and Russia persistently declined to take action. There was therefore no check to the work of destruction, and the position of the unfortunate Armenians appeared hopeless. Diplomatic action can never be successful unless there lie behind it the forces of war. Threatening but afraid to strike, encouraging but afraid to help, the European Powers did but play into the hands of their adversary. Rendered desperate by unsatisfied hopes, and still half believing that assistance would be given them, the more violent spirits among the Armenians broke into open rebellion. There was something of truth in the Turkish assertion as to the

Outbreak in Constantinople. existence of a secret revolutionary society. In August 1896 its members threw aside all caution; explosions of bombs and dynamite took place in many parts of Constantinople, and the Ottoman Bank was occupied by the insurgents. The excuse long waited for had now been put into the hands of the Sultan. The soldiery and the mob made common cause, and for two days the streets of Constantinople were a scene of horrible pillage and butchery in which some 5000 Christians are said to have perished. This outbreak of the Armenians in Constantinople itself, proving to all appearance the reality of the alleged revolutionary society, disarmed even their European friends. No satisfactory reply could be given when the Sultan issued a note, declaring that his merciful reforms had been rejected by his rebellious subjects, who would be satisfied with nothing short of an administrative self-government such

as would practically break up his empire, a disaster to which he could never submit. The tables were indeed turned when the note closed with a demand for the extradition of the refugees, and a charge against Europe of harbouring revolutionists.

Never was there a more complete failure than that which had attended the efforts of the European concert to save or to avenge the wretched victims of Turkish misrule.

But if in his extreme desire to avoid war, his dread of European complications, and his belief in the power of his own Insurrections in Crete. diplomacy, Lord Salisbury had been betrayed into

adopting a course which had led to signal failure, his efforts were somewhat more successful in another and similar case which arose at the same time. The Christians and Mahomedans in the isle of Crete stood on more equal terms than in Asia Minor. The Cretans in fact had never been thoroughly subdued; resistance to Turkish misrule was there traditional. Driven to insurrection in 1895, they had been for the time suppressed. But in the summer of the following year the island was again a scene of anarchy. There was thus another opportunity for the interference of the European concert, and, acting at first together, the Powers were successful. The Cretan insurgents demanded that the Governor of the island should be a Christian, that the Turkish troops should be confined to certain fortresses, and that a predominant share of the administration should be placed in Christian hands. The Powers pressed these reforms upon the Porte; and the Sultan was compelled to yield and to promulgate a constitution more or less in accordance with the wishes of the insurgents. But reforms in Turkey, carried out upon the authority of the Sultan, appear always to have the same result: no advantage accrues to the Christians for whose benefit they are intended; the Mahomedans break out in anger and have recourse to outrage; the Government is either unable or unwilling to bring them to order. Thus it happened now in Crete. A weak Christian Governor, a strong Turkish Commander-in-Chief, an abundant use of Turkish troops, soon produced wild commotion. In order to localise the disturbance the Mediterranean fleets of the various Powers gathered round the island, although the formation of a complete cordon round it was not carried out. But it was not from the fleets of the great Powers that the Cretans hoped to receive material assistance. The country with which they were naturally most in sympathy was Greece, and it was to Greece that they now appealed for help in their distress. Foolishly overrating its strength, and perhaps believing that its action would

not be displeasing to the Powers however much they might protest against it, Greece listened favourably to the appeal. A Greek flotilla under Prince George (the second son of the King of Greece) was despatched to Crete to distract attention while Colonel Vassos with some 1500 men landed on the coast. The admirals of the European fleets compelled Prince George to retire, though not until his immediate object had been attained, and the troops had been safely landed. The admirals, unable to give frank support to either party, were driven to content themselves with the occupation of certain towns from which they bade the insurgents to hold aloof.

The task which Greece had undertaken was nothing less than a war with Turkey, and troops were rapidly collecting on both sides of the frontier line. The peaceful plans of the European concert were thus entirely upset. Great was the wrath of the Powers; most of them desired to punish the interference of Greece with a heavy hand. Here however Lord Salisbury intervened with effect, and insisted that the future of Crete must be first satisfactorily determined. He was himself in favour of establishing autonomy on the island, and persuaded his colleagues to accept his suggestion. From this vantage ground it was possible to address with effect both the would-be belligerents at once. Greece was told that the Powers having made up their mind, the troops and ships must be withdrawn within six days or active measures would be taken against them; and it was intimated to the Porte that the autonomy of Crete would be at once established. This two-sided declaration should have resulted in peace; but the question at issue was already decided. Unfortunately for itself, Greece had been seized with an overweening ambition, and while the Sultan expressed his willingness to accept the condition (which by no means implied that he intended to carry it out), Greece refused to retire. The position for the moment was absurd enough. The concert of European Powers, created to coerce Turkey, found itself actually supporting it against the only country which had had courage enough to withstand its tyranny. It was in vain that a strict blockade was instituted and every effort made to induce the insurgents to lay down their arms. In April 1897 the war on the mainland broke out. The conduct of neither the army nor the navy justified the sanguine and ambitious hopes of the Greeks. It soon became evident that a terrible blunder had been committed. Before the end of May the series of defeats to which their arms had been subjected had proved to the Greeks the uselessness of continued efforts, and a new Ministry was formed for the purpose of making peace. Now that events had

Interference of
Greece.

rendered the war innocuous, the Powers were naturally inclined to be tender to the Greek interests. Lord Salisbury took a prominent part in arranging the terms of peace, and limiting the large demands which success encouraged Turkey to advance. Thessaly was restored to Greece, and peace was purchased by a rectification of the frontier and a payment of a war indemnity of £4,000,000. As a preliminary step, Greece promised to resign all claims on Crete and to accept the establishment of an autonomous Government.

Thus the interest of the question returned back to the island. There seemed every prospect of an interminable dispute as to the person to whom the government should be intrusted. After much discussion, Russia ventured to propose Prince George of Greece. It was impossible that such a proposition should be at once favourably received. The dissensions among the Powers were the opportunity of the Turks, there was no withdrawal of troops from the island while the wrangling went on. At last what threatened to become a deadlock was solved somewhat unexpectedly by the breaking up of the concert. The German Emperor, who had throughout held a strong view in opposition to Greece, took umbrage not only at the proposition of the Russian candidate, but at the disregard paid on more than one occasion to his advice, and repudiated all further share in concerted action. He was followed by Austria. The remaining Powers felt obliged to act, and gave their admirals instruction to set up the autonomous Government at once. But the Turkish troops were still not withdrawn, for the Porte had not unnaturally grown less submissive amid the quarrels of the allies. On the 6th of September the Mahomedans went so far as to attack a British force in Crete, and several officers and men were killed and wounded. Admiral Noel could no longer endure the restraints of diplomacy. He bombarded the town and demanded the instant withdrawal of the Turkish troops. Thus Lord Salisbury's hand was forced; it was impossible for him to refuse to support the action of his admiral. He was compelled to declare that in the last resort England would act alone. The mere threat was sufficient, the Powers of the concert were at once roused to action. Admiral Noel undertook the civil administration of Crete, and under the escort of British troops the Turks were marched out of the island. There was no longer any difficulty in carrying out the necessary changes, and on December 21, 1897, Prince George landed and took over the government. His success seemed complete. Peace and order began to find a place in the troubled island.

The action of Lord Salisbury had been throughout the Eastern

Settlement of
Crete.

question directed entirely to the preservation of peace; so much so that there were not a few of his political opponents who considered that he had been too conciliatory, and accused him of allowing England to be dragged ignominiously in the wake of the other members of the European concert. This was a complaint which Affairs in Egypt. could at all events not be made against the conduct of the Ministry in respect to Egypt. Both political parties were pledged to ultimate withdrawal from that country, but the moment when that pledge should be redeemed appeared to be left to the judgment of each successive English Ministry. To the party now in power the lengthened occupation of the high road to India seemed, from an imperial point of view, to be of the greatest importance. The work of the English had without doubt been highly salutary, and there was no difficulty in finding a plausible excuse for continuing the occupation. It might not unreasonably be said, as Mr. Balfour did say when declaring the position of the Government in this matter, that the condition of Egypt could not be regarded as satisfactory until control had been re-established over the Soudan. That is to say, the condition on which the pledge of withdrawal rested could not be fulfilled till Egypt had regained the provinces conquered by the Dervishes in 1886. The occasion of this clear declaration of policy was a vote of censure moved by Mr. Morley, when it had become known that preparations were made for the advance of the Egyptian and British troops in March 1896.

The immediate causes for the action of the Government appear to have been two—the one to assist the Italians, the other to free the Egyptian frontier from a possible assault of the Mahdi's troops. The Italian attempt to play their part in the general game of territorial expansion which was going on, by establishing a colonial province on the Red Sea, had brought them into contact with Abyssinia; their army had been severely handled at Adowa, and at the same time their fortress of Kassala was threatened by the Dervishes. From this danger the English advance would probably relieve them. The Egyptian frontier was at present fixed at Wady Halfa, but it seemed almost certain that the invasion of the Mahdists would be continued, and the frontier be driven still further back. A defence upon offensive lines appeared the wisest course to adopt. Sir Herbert Kitchener, the Sirdar of the Egyptian army, had therefore received instructions to move southward, and on the 20th of March he crossed the existing frontier line, and pushed on to Akasheh, on the way to Dongola.

The Soudan Campaign, 1896.

Considerable difficulty had been found in obtaining the money for the expedition. The probability of complications with the European powers became evident from the first. Freedom of action in Egypt was seriously hampered by the arrangements which had been entered into at the time of the liquidation of the Egyptian debt; France and Russia had refused to allow Egypt to draw the half million necessary for the expedition from the "Caisse de la dette." They even went to law upon the subject, and won their case both before the mixed tribunals and on appeal. England however solved this difficulty by advancing the money, though not without an interchange of words which were scarcely friendly with the French Ministry.

The Sirdar's march was a complete success. The railway was pushed on as he advanced, gunboats accompanied him, and before the end of the year 1896 the town and province of Dongola were again united to Egypt. It is not clear that the Government had determined to reconquer the whole Soudan when they began their operations; it would seem in fact that the movement was somewhat tentative. The success which attended it allowed them to form a more definite determination, and in the following year it became certain that the expedition would not stop short of Khartoum. Very slowly, but very surely, the Sirdar advanced up the river, still creating the railway behind him as he went. The whole of 1897 was employed in preparations. The capture of outposts, the exploration of the river by the gunboats, the continuous advance of the railway, and the renewal of friendly relations with the inhabitants, paved the way for the final assault upon the heart of the Mahdist empire. In 1898 the blow so ably prepared fell. A brilliant victory on the Atbara (April 8) rendered the possession of the province of Berber secure; and as the autumn approached, the army, which had been concentrated for a final effort, came in sight of Omdurman. The Dervishes moved out to meet them. An attack on all sides was made on the British position and maintained with heroic bravery for several hours. The Dervishes were however compelled to withdraw, and the Egyptian army continued its advance towards the town. They were again, while on their march, suddenly assaulted upon their right flank with extraordinary vehemence, and disaster was only averted by the able arrangements of Colonel Hector Macdonald and the firmness of the British troops under his command. The destruction of life was great. It is probable that the victorious advance of the native Egyptian troops was marked by acts of

Kitchener's march to Khartoum.

Battle of Omdurman, Sept. 2, 1898.

cruelty not allowed in civilised warfare; but the temptation to kill the wounded, who it was well known were ready to fire at the backs of the troops as they advanced, was irresistible, and affords much excuse for the unusual destruction of life. It was the last effort of the Dervishes. Omdurman was undefended, the Mahdist empire was virtually at an end. The toil and skill of the English officers who had been intrusted with the reformation of the Egyptian Army since 1882 had been rewarded, the native soldiers had proved themselves under such leading formidable and trustworthy troops.

The business of re-establishing the old limits of the Egyptian empire had been done well, but it was not to be expected that it would meet with approval in Europe. The triumphant close of the expedition seemed likely to be but the prelude of a great war with France. Instructions had been given to the Sirdar to take measures to secure all the provinces which had once belonged to Egypt, and it was hoped that he would effect a junction with an expedition under Colonel James Macdonald, which was making its way northward from the

The French at Fashoda.

Uganda Protectorate. The union of the Anglo-Egyptian sphere of influence with the district of Lake Victoria would have gone far towards realising the dream of African empire which Mr. Rhodes had briefly summed up when he declared his hope of seeing an English railway running from the Cape to Cairo. Fanciful though the dream may have been, it had taken great hold of the public mind, and the victorious reoccupation of the Soudan seemed to bring it almost within reach. Great therefore was the shock when news arrived in England that the Sirdar, in his progress southward, had arrived at Fashoda and found a fort flying the French flag, and held by Captain Marchand, a French officer. A slight failure in judgment, a little over hasty self-assertion which would not have been unnatural in a commander stopped in his victorious career by an obstacle apparently so trivial, might have produced disastrous results. But Lord Kitchener, conscious of the extreme awkwardness of the situation, carefully avoided any act of war. As a matter of fact his arrival had saved the French expedition from destruction, for not only were its provisions exhausted, but it was threatened by the Dervishes in overwhelming numbers. He asked Captain Marchand to proceed to Cairo, but on his refusal he allowed him to remain unmolested with the French flag still flying over his fort, and contented himself with hoisting the Egyptian flag and stationing a large body of troops in the immediate neighbourhood. The incident itself, with the fearful issues involved in it, he regarded

as too important to be treated on his own authority, and he wisely left the further steps to be taken to the decision of the Governments of England and France, in order that it might be treated as an international question.

The incident of Fashoda was but an extreme instance of a policy long pursued by the French; for in the colonial aggression of the time the French had taken a leading part, and had found a field for their activity in North Africa. They had claimed as their "sphere of influence" the whole of the "hinterland" lying behind their colonies of Algeria and Tunis, and extending as far as Lake Chad. The claim had been accepted, and a line had been drawn for their southern boundary, from Sey on the Niger to Barua on the south-west side of Lake Chad, beyond which line the English "sphere of influence" under the management of the Niger Company began. The difficulties in the way of approaching Lake Chad from the north were almost insurmountable. But the French also had colonies on the west coast, Senegal and Senegambia, and Dahomey further to the south. And though recognising the Sey-Barua line as the southern limit of the "hinterland" of Algeria, they held themselves at liberty to work eastward and northward from their west-coast settlements so as to lap round the English colony of Lagos, and to obtain command of the Upper Niger on the southern side of this accepted line. The frontier between the French in Dahomey and the English in Lagos had been settled as far as the 11th parallel; and the understanding of the English was that this line, which ran straight northward from Porto Novo on the coast, was to be continued to Sey. The French however, very anxious for an outlet upon the navigable Upper Niger, had pushed in between the 11th parallel and Sey, and had even crossed the Niger and established posts in what had been the country of Sokoto, which was undeniably under English influence. Negotiations had been entered into on this point, and a Convention had been drawn up, by which the English allowed their frontier line to end at Ilo on the Niger, the district intervening between Ilo and Sey falling to France. Six months had been allowed for the ratification of this Convention, and it was still uncompleted when the battle of Omdurman took place.

French encroachments in West Africa.

But besides their northern and their western colonies, the French claimed a considerable territory above the Congo. From this also they had pushed eastward and were establishing themselves on the Ubangi. It was from this furthest province that they had despatched Captain Marchand's

French encroachments in the valley of the Nile.

party for the purpose of securing for themselves an uninterrupted exit upon the Nile. Up to this time they had in this direction been only occupying what might be considered as lying legitimately within their sphere of influence. But secret instructions had more than once been given to their officials to push on down the river Bahr-el-Ghazal and secure their connection with the Nile. It seems impossible to deny that in thus acting they were wilfully taking what they knew full well would be regarded by England as a hostile step. For again and again the English Government had declared openly their claim to exert a sole and paramount influence over the valley of the Nile. In the Treaty with Germany of 1890, and subsequently while treating both with Italy and the Congo State, the declaration had been made without any objection from France; and in 1895 Sir Edward Grey, Under Secretary of State, had taken the opportunity of a forward movement on the part of M. Léotard, the Governor of Ubangi, to utter a formal protest in the House of Commons, and to declare in words understood by all diplomatists to be of the gravest import, that "any attempt to encroach upon the Nile valley would be regarded as an unfriendly act."

It was impossible for Lord Salisbury to disregard the claim thus publicly made, or to let himself be drawn into negotiations on the subject. He at once took up a firm position, demanding the immediate removal of Marchand, and declining even to listen to the arguments of the French; for Monsieur Delcassé, the French Minister, attempted to vindicate his action by arguments which were really trivial. At first he denied that the Marchand expedition was an expedition at all; the captain was merely "an emissary of civilisation," sent forward by M. Léotard; but the equipment of the expedition did not allow of such a construction. He then urged that the valley of the Bahr-el-Ghazal had become, after the withdrawal of the Egyptians in 1886, a "no man's land," open to the occupation of any Power. The French had however on more than one occasion declared, and claimed credit for the declaration, that they would not allow the temporary loss of these provinces to invalidate the permanence of the Khedive's right over them. They had on this plea ejected the officials of the Congo State, and obliged the Belgians to relinquish a lease which they had contracted with the Egyptians; but indeed it was scarcely the weakness of their own arguments which obliged them to give way. It was plain from every utterance of the public men of all parties in England that the country would support Lord Salisbury even though he brought on a war. The

The French
withdraw from
Fashoda.

French Government thought it wise to yield to this demonstration and withdrew from Fashoda. Lord Salisbury was able to say (November 4, 1898), in the Guildhall, that the immediate crisis was passed. "A cause of controversy of an acute and somewhat dangerous character has been removed, and we cannot but congratulate ourselves." Negotiations followed, by which the limits, not hitherto very clearly defined, between the French and English spheres of influence, were settled; and the whole valley of the Nile and its tributaries was formally reserved to England. There is no doubt that the firmness of Lord Salisbury's action in this matter, which in the case of one so peace-loving must have presented much difficulty, was of great importance, and did more than even the battle of Omdurman to establish the position of England in the political world. There were those who saw in it a key to what had appeared a somewhat weak inclination to yield to the demands of Germany and Russia, more especially in the further East. Lord Salisbury had felt it necessary to avoid any complications which might form an obstacle to the firm attitude he was resolved to assume with regard to the advances of France in Africa.

Affairs in the Corea had brought on a war between Japan and China in 1894. It was short and decisive. As in other matters, so in their army and navy the Japanese had adopted European methods; their troops, drilled by French and German officers, were constantly victorious; while one army, pushing round the north of the gulf of Pechili, advanced upon Peking, a second army captured the strong fortress of Port Arthur and occupied the peninsula of Liaotung.

The unexpected collapse of China in its war with Japan revealed the weakness of that great Empire. Not unnaturally, every European country which had interests in the far East thought that the time had arrived for securing and enlarging them. Thus Russia, which was hard at work on its trans-Siberian railway, wished to secure a satisfactory commercial terminus to that great undertaking. As a naval Power, it had long aimed at securing a harbour for its fleet which should not be closed during many months of the year by ice as Vladivostok was; and, being in immediate contact with the Chinese empire, it naturally desired a preponderating influence at Peking. France, smitten with the colonial fever of the time, and full of mercantile jealousy, saw a hope of increasing the value of its establishments in Tonquin, and of thwarting the commercial supremacy of England by securing an

War between
China and
Japan.

Interests of
European
countries.

access to the heart of China in that direction. Germany, whose trade interests were very large, was just at this time eagerly looking towards the formation of a strong fleet, and wanted a secure port and coaling station for its ships in the China seas. The interests of England were in some ways far greater than those of any of the other Powers; its trade amounted to 80 per cent. of the whole foreign exports of China; but these interests were not local, they were spread over the



whole empire. There was no desire on the part of England to acquire territory. Opportunity for the free expansion of trade, the maintenance and the enlargement of the treaties by which from time to time that opportunity had been won, were the points on which the English Ministers would naturally have to insist. As the burden of territory was not desired, their efforts were directed to maintain the integrity of the Chinese empire, and to seek commercial advantages through the

action of the Chinese themselves. The integrity of the empire thus became the first object of British policy. Freedom from any differential treatment which should hamper trade followed in its wake. To secure either one or the other must have taxed to the extreme the diplomatic capacity of any body of statesmen. Not only was it necessary to fight the battle against the whole body of counter-interests, it was necessary also to steer between the rival interests of the opponents themselves. The task was greater than could be accomplished; and Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour found themselves obliged, after a lengthened and many-sided struggle, to be contented with a state of things which, if it did not realise their objects in a completed form, seemed at least to secure England from any great disadvantage.

The most striking episode in this diplomatic war was the struggle with Russia. The efforts of the English Ministry to exclude Russia from the Liaotung peninsula were not well conceived, and wore an appearance of half-heartedness. Indeed it may be gathered from their utterances in England that they had no great objection to gratifying the Russian desire for an ice-free port. At all events, in their contest with Count Mouravieff, a diplomatist whose methods were not of a very scrupulous character, they were completely worsted. After occupying the harbour of Port Arthur in the winter of 1897, the Russians, under the excuse that, unable to reach their own icy port, they were enjoying the hospitality of China, speedily succeeded in obtaining a lease which practically placed in their hands not only Port Arthur itself, but Tali-en-wan, its commercial neighbour, and the whole large province of Manchuria.

But Russia had not been the first to lay hands upon Chinese territory. Already Germany had struck its blow. With a knowledge that Russia was certain to obtain a port, and that Kiao-chow in the Chan Tung province was one of the ports coveted, Germany suddenly seized upon it. The opportunity of which advantage was taken was the murder of certain German missionaries in the province of Chan Tung. As the fullest apologies were offered and severe penalties exacted, the murder was plainly but an excuse. The temporary occupation was speedily changed into a lease, giving the Germans sovereign rights over the whole of the Chan Tung province. Thus in the face of continual diplomatic opposition, two steps had been taken which appeared to thwart irretrievably the English policy of territorial integrity.

The third step, which proclaimed to the world at once the diplomatic

defeat of the English Government and their determination to maintain their position in China at all hazards, was the occupation, in May 1898, by England itself of Wai-hei-wai, a port immediately facing Port Arthur, and which at the time was held to be highly defensible. Another breach in their original policy speedily followed. Not to be left behind in the acquisition of coast settlements, France had obtained a lease of Kwang Chow Lung in the south near Tonquin. The English Government thought it necessary, as a counterpoise to this increase of the French power, to obtain a considerable extension of the old settlement of Kau Lung, on the mainland just opposite Hong Kong, which was very desirable for the complete defence of that great mercantile centre.

It seemed at the time, in the middle of the year 1898, as though China in its decadence was to undergo the fate of the African continent, and fall a prey to the system of spheres of influence, sea-coast settlements, occupation of hinterlands, and all the other apparatus of European aggression. But here the policy of Lord Salisbury was more successful. Allowing the principle of "spheres of influence," or rather

England secures Wai-hei-wai.
 Salisbury's negotiations.
 "of interest," and claiming for England the whole valley of the Yang-tsi-Chiang, he coupled it with a modified attempt to revindicate the integrity of the Chinese empire. While obtaining great and valuable concessions for English trade, he bound the Chinese Government not to part with any of the provinces in which the interest of England could be regarded as paramount. The other countries followed his example, and before the close of the year 1899, with the exception of Manchuria and Chan-Tung, the Chinese provinces were all safeguarded by treaties of non-alienation with one or other of the great European Powers. As long as the Chinese Government was maintained and would keep its treaties, it was unable, even though it desired it, to disintegrate itself. With this indirect and modified reconstitution of their territorial policy, the English Ministry had to be content. This part of their policy had in fact been always regarded as subordinate to what was after all the real interest of England, the opening of opportunities for commercial expansion. And even so, it had been more or less complicated with European politics. It had been necessary to conciliate the friendship of Germany, and to avoid a breach with Russia, if England was to stand clear and unhampered in the important discussions to which the action of France in Africa was at the time giving rise. There was some truth in the assertion of the Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, that the interests of the trade with China were more or less sacrificed to the necessities

of European politics. The acquisition of Port Arthur by Russia not only drove the English Government to abandon their avowed policy and to acquire fresh territory, it also compelled them to meddle directly in commercial matters which had hitherto been left to individuals or companies. They were themselves obliged henceforward to undertake the business of extracting concessions from the Chinese, and openly to devote themselves to the support of mercantile interests. No treaty was henceforward made between China and any one of the Powers without a demand on the part of England for equality of treatment. And only in the case of Manchuria and Chan Tung did they fail in making good their claim. Everywhere the old treaty rights granted to all Europeans in common were carefully upheld. Separate action was as far as possible avoided; and where concessions were obtained the companies to which they were granted were of an international character in which more than one nation had an interest. The possibility of the exclusion of British interests was thus largely diminished. Even in Manchuria it was found possible to come to a friendly arrangement with Russia, by which at all events the two countries bound themselves not to throw obstacles in each other's way in their respective spheres of influence. The somewhat late appearance of the United States upon the scene set a seal upon the success of this "open door" policy, as it was called. Their Minister, Mr. Hay, succeeded in obtaining from Russia, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan, a declaration that they would respect vested interests. The signatories declared their readiness to refrain from interference with the privileges of any treaty port, and from any attack, by the imposition of differential duties, upon the advantages already secured by their commercial rivals within any sphere of interest under their control or within any area held by them on lease.

It is plain that the whole success, such as it was, of this policy depended on the power of China to maintain itself.

Treaties and concessions formed the basis of a system which could last only so long as there remained a Power capable of treating and conceding. That China would long continue to be such a Power was by no means a matter of certainty. The rival claims and interests of European countries had scarcely been brought into workable shape, when events in the Chinese empire itself drove them to make common cause in assaulting it. The Japanese war had been a rude awakening of the rulers of China from their habitual complacency. Blow after blow had fallen upon the empire, which was now exhibiting all the pathetic symptoms of

The Boxer insurrection, 1899.

slow decay. The shifty diplomacy of weakness, the unwilling concession now to one Power now to another, the latent hope of playing off one against the other, the anger smothered beneath an enforced show of civility, characteristics which constantly mark the decadence of a venerable but worn-out civilisation, all were there. But amid these signs of decay there were statesmen who recognised the causes of weakness, and were not without hope that by reforms, and by the adoption of some at least of the weapons of their adversaries, the country might be recalled to renewed life. The Emperor, a man of feeble character, seems for awhile to have listened to their teaching, and to have issued edicts enforcing widespread changes. But it is not every people who, like the Japanese, can suddenly forget their past, and honestly accept the forms and requirements of a new state of society. Centuries of isolation, of contempt and hatred of foreign interference, were not to be wiped out by any imperial edicts. Apart from the administrative body, the bulk of the vast nation retained its deeply rooted belief in the excellence of its own institutions and hatred of the foreigner. The administrative body, itself deeply corrupt, was divided in opinion, and, although the union of races was generally believed to have been fairly well established, divided in race also. The reforming temper found its home chiefly among men of the old Chinese race, and its leaders in the viceroys of the great southern provinces. Conservatism was chiefly prevalent among the Manchu nobles of the north. Circumstances had allowed the Emperor and his reforming friends to secure the reins of government. But in 1898 the Empress-dowager, a woman of masculine character and ability, who had exercised paramount influence in the earlier years of the reign, carried out a *coup d'état*, and re-established herself and her party as the real directors of the imperial policy. The change of government did not at first appear to bring with it any immediate change in the relations of the empire with foreign Powers. But the anti-foreign feeling was allowed to assert itself more freely, and the secret societies, of which China has always been full, began to show active hostility. There were outbreaks in many places, and missionaries were ill-used and put to death. The most vigorous of the anti-foreign societies was known as the Sacred Harmony Fists, and the name of "Boxers" was applied generally to the rebels. They gradually extended their action through the northern provinces, killing native Christians as well as foreigners with many circumstances of cruelty.

Although some pretence at suppressing these movements was made, the European representatives were convinced that it was merely a

preference; and early in 1900 letters were sent to their respective courts demanding immediate action. They suggested a naval demonstration. As both the Russians and Lord Salisbury saw considerable danger in this suggestion, the application was not immediately attended to. Left to themselves, the representatives continued to put what pressure they could upon the Chinese Government. They procured an edict against the Boxers, but it proved entirely ineffective; at the same time the Empress took a very threatening step in the opposite direction by appointing as successor to the throne the son of Prince Tuan, the leader of the conservative Manchu nobles. As the disturbances continued and spread, and the Boxers, apparently working in co-operation with the imperial troops, began to gather round Peking and threatened to cut it off from Tientsin from whence alone assistance could be obtained, on the 1st of June a small body of guards, consisting of marines of various nationalities, was brought up for the defence of the Legations. Tientsin itself was now threatened. The Powers began to recognise the critical character of the situation; troops were collected, and on the 10th of June, a most urgent telegram having been received at Tientsin, Admiral Seymour marched to the relief of the Legations with a mixed force of some 2000 men. But by this time the enemy opposed to him had so increased in strength that he found it impossible to fight his way through; his communications were broken, and he was obliged to withdraw. It was not till the 26th of June that the relieving force sent out from Tientsin to assist him in his retreat was able to bring back the admiral and his troops into safety.

Meanwhile what was passing in Peking was absolutely unknown. The wildest rumours were afloat of terrible massacres, and the deepest anxiety was felt as to the fate of the besieged Legations. It ultimately appeared that the Europeans, collected chiefly in the British Legation and the surrounding buildings, had from the 20th of June been subject to constant artillery and rifle fire, and had there defended themselves with splendid bravery and endurance until the 16th of July. On that day the bombardment had been relaxed. But as there was no cessation of the irregular firing, and as the siege continued to be closely pressed, there seemed every probability of a speedy renewal of the assault. During all that time, although troops were being collected as quickly as possible, the defenders of Tientsin were not sufficiently numerous to do more than defend themselves. It was not until the beginning of August that a joint force of adequate strength was collected, and, after some

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Danger of the
Legations in
Pekin.

Siege of the
Legations in
Pekin.

sharp fighting, forced its way into Peking and placed the defenders of the Legations in safety. It was none too soon. The resources of the besieged were almost exhausted. The fighting men were few and had suffered heavy losses, and though supplies of food were found in the shops within the besieged area, and the large number of horses afforded the Europeans a plentiful if unappetising diet, the thousands of native Christians who had taken refuge in the enclosure around the Legations suffered greatly and the infant mortality was terrible. Much resourcefulness and much gallantry had been shown by every branch of the motley forces of the besieged. A few words from a private letter give a vivid picture of the severity of the struggle: "Of course the Legation is knocked about beyond recognition. In the building of fortifications every available brick has been pulled out and used; every available carpet, curtain, tablecloth, sheet, and pair of trousers have long since been made into sandbags, of which I think we must now have used about fifteen thousand. Bombproof shelters have been dug all over the place. Seventy missionaries are camped in the chapel. Families of all nations and races occupy our students' downstairs quarters. We have tried to guard against mining by digging a ten-foot trench all the way round. During the first days of the siege the wretches made the most determined attempts to burn us out, creeping up to houses that stood close to our walls and firing them with paraffin. They repeated this over and over again, and we had to work like very demons with our wretched little hand-pumps to check the flames, while the Chinese would keep up a hot fire on us all the time from the houses round." The Chinese Government had been strangely inconsistent, at one time pressing on the siege with all their power, at another time parleying with the besieged, even supplying them with a little food, and breaking off the regular bombardment. Their conduct is not easy to understand, but it appears to have been largely influenced by the course of the fighting around Tientsin, and on the whole there is little doubt of their complicity in the outbreak and in the siege.

The relief of the Legations having been successfully carried out by the combined troops under a German commander, Count von Waldersee, international difficulties at once arose. Having occupied Peking, it remained to be decided what the army was to do. Was punishment to be exacted for the probable but as yet unproved complicity of the Chinese Court? Or were the armies to withdraw, and the matter to fall into the hands of negotiators? The Russians at once proposed the latter step. In forming the joint army

Peace negotia-
tions.

the Powers had pledged themselves not to acquire territory. The maintenance of a Government in Peking capable of keeping order and of insisting upon the Treaties was an object of the first importance, especially to England. It was also the accepted policy of England to treat with any such sufficient native power without inquiring into its antecedents. Yet Lord Salisbury appeared unwilling to accept the Russian proposition. So also, and far more strongly, was Germany, which circumstances had placed for the time in a very commanding position. The murder of the German Minister during the uproar gave a good excuse for retaliatory measures. Moreover the allied forces had already been placed under the command of a German field-marshal. France, on the other hand, adopted the Russian view, while Italy ranged itself with Germany. In fact upon this question the lines of European friendships were found repeated; the members of the Triple and Dual Alliances appeared, as usual, to advocate opposite lines of policy. Such differences of opinion are no doubt inevitable when rival nations combine in the face of a great emergency to carry out a common line of action. In the present instance it was found possible so far to allay the rivalries that the agreement between the European Powers was not interrupted. Terms which could be offered to the Chinese were finally arrived at and accepted early in January 1901. The susceptibilities of Germany and of Japan were soothed by formal and complete apologies or the death of their diplomatic agents. The banishment of Prince Tuan and the execution of some of the ringleaders of the late disturbances served as a slight satisfaction to the prevailing desire for retaliation. The infliction of a large war indemnity, amounting on the whole to about £140,000,000, satisfied the somewhat greedy demands of several of the Allies; while the promise of commercial advantages, and the apparent maintenance of the integrity of the Chinese empire, might be regarded as a reward for the self-restraint exhibited by England for the purpose of maintaining friendly relations with the Allies.

In addition to the ever-increasing difficulties which attend colonial expansion, and the questions connected with international policy, the British Government has on its hands the management of the great Indian dependency. Lord Salisbury's Ministry was not free from anxiety in this direction.

In a dominion so vast and widespread as that of the British empire the policy pursued in any particular country must inevitably be more or less subservient to the general foreign policy of the empire. Nowhere have the

India.

The North-
West frontier
difficulties.

complications thus introduced been more obvious than on the north-west frontier of India. The intricacies of the Eastern question, and the relations of Great Britain with Russia and with the Mahomedan Powers have constantly to be considered. The disturbed condition of the independent tribes occupying the passes, the shifting attitude of the Afghan Ameer, and the constantly overshadowing dread of the approach of the Russians, has made that portion of India the scene not only of many of the most striking episodes in the history of the British Army, but also the great battle-field among Indian politicians. It is with respect to that portion of India that the policies of expansion or concentration, and the advantages of various scientific frontiers, have been most hotly discussed. But of late years, although at times differing in detail, a definite policy has been adopted, and has been handed on unbroken by Ministerial changes at home.

The independence of Afghanistan and the friendship of the Ameer have been the keynote of this policy. In *The frontiers of Afghanistan.* Abdurahman the English had found a man of great ability. Unbiassed by any strong predilection in favour of either of his great Christian neighbours, his view of his own interests led him to fall in with the policy of the Indian Government. It was by the friendship of the English and by their subsidies that he hoped to maintain his position against domestic rivals, and to keep back the advancing waves of Russian occupation. But this conviction did not prevent him from keeping a jealous eye upon the action of his friends, or from using from time to time those weapons of intrigue which come so readily to the Afghan. In pursuance of their general line of policy, the English had thought it necessary to insist upon a careful delimitation of the frontiers of Afghanistan. They had been loyally assisted by the Ameer in carrying out this work along the northern frontier; nor was much difficulty found upon the side of Persia and in Beluchistan. But the marking out of the north-west frontier was a much more complicated business. No Afghan ruler could forget that the Durani empire had once extended beyond the passes to the plain of the Punjab, or ignore the opportunities for unavowed opposition to the English advance which were offered by the wild tribes of Orakzais, Afridis, and Mohmands, who occupied the mountains, and who, while independent both of England and of Afghanistan, could always apply in their difficulties for the assistance of the Ameer. The Indian Government had however succeeded, in 1893, in inducing Abdurahman to receive Sir Mortimer Durand and to sign an agreement with him, marking out somewhat roughly a frontier between his own dominions and these

independent tribes. It was hoped that this delimitation would prevent the risk of complications with Afghanistan which had constantly attended the efforts to reduce the wild tribesmen to order.

Meanwhile, beyond the Afghan frontier the English had brought Cashmere under their protection, had pushed on as far *The siege of Chitral.* as Gilgit, covering the passes in the Pamirs, and had even established some sort of authority over the valley of the upper Kunar occupied by the small state of Chitral. At the beginning of 1895 the English survey officers were employed under the escort of the Commander-in-Chief of the Afghan army, in marking out the boundary between Chitral and Afghanistan, when they were informed that higher up the valley, the little English garrison in the fort of Chitral was besieged, and, quite cut off from external communications, was anxiously awaiting relief. Taking advantage of a disputed succession in Chitral, Umra Khan, an Afghan freebooter who had established himself in the neighbourhood, had moved suddenly upon the fort and had surrounded it. As Abdurahman was known to be aiming at the possession of this valley from which he had already once ejected Umra Khan, the strong step taken by that chieftain in the very presence of the Afghan army, and the skill and energy with which the siege was pressed, raised suspicions as to the Ameer's honesty which were never thoroughly removed. The siege afforded another opportunity for one of those exhibitions of personal bravery and unflinching tenacity of which the annals of the north-west frontier are full, and gave another proof, if proof was wanted, of the value of well-led native troops. Under Mr. Robertson, the English agent, the little garrison, composed of Sikhs and imperial levies from Cashmere, held out for forty-six days in the ill-constructed fort. The enemy, numerous and well armed, was fully supplied with fascines and other material for forming shelters. The towers of the fort were of wood, and liable to be easily set on fire. Trees and buildings closely surrounded the fort, and enabled the besiegers to approach close to the walls and even to fire through the loopholes. The garrison throughout the siege was on half rations. Several vigorous assaults were repulsed; more than once the enemy set fire to the towers, which were only saved with great difficulty; and finally, when a mine was run close to the walls and almost ready for explosion, it was destroyed by a gallant sally of the Sikhs headed by Lieutenant Harley. It was the last effort of the enemy. Three days later, on the 20th of April, it was known that the besiegers had retired. A force under Colonel Kelly had pushed its way over the snowy passes from Gilgit and approached from the

north; while Sir Robert Low and General Gatacre, with troops hastily collected at Peshawur, had crossed the mountain ridges and entered the valley from the south. The relief of the garrison was thus secured.

Masters of the Chitral Valley, the English were now called upon to decide on the course to be adopted for the future. **Decision to occupy Chitral.** The Liberal Ministry were at the time in office. In their opinion the right course was to retire from the conquered valley; for not only should the policy of England be one rather of concentration than of advance, but there were other reasons which rendered retirement desirable. Russia, with whom frontier settlements had been only lately completed, might not unreasonably take umbrage at the occupation of Chitral. Moreover, in order to induce the tribes to allow the passage of British troops to the relief of the fort, a proclamation had been issued, declaring that it was not the intention of England to acquire fresh territory; and it was a grave question whether the national honour would allow of anything short of immediate withdrawal in the face of such a proclamation. But before effect could be given to this view, the change of Government occurred; and Lord Salisbury's administration, regarding a retirement as likely to be injurious to British prestige, determined to continue the occupation of the valley. A road was ordered to be made so as to allow of the rapid advance of troops if necessary, and a considerable force was established at Malakand.

Not much more than a year elapsed before the whole frontier was in a wild state of excitement. The causes of this excitement were no doubt very various. The marking out of the boundary between the frontier tribes and Afghanistan, in pursuance of the arrangements of the Durand Treaty, had been nearly completed. But the object of the frontier delimitations was not unnaturally misunderstood; it appeared to the wild and independent mountaineers to be a British and not an Afghan boundary which was being settled. That the object was to secure them from Afghan interference was not so clear to their minds as the intention at all events to separate them from Afghan assistance. Thus, already trembling for their independence, the apparent breach of faith in the establishment of the Chitral road could not but be regarded by them as an insidious step on the part of the British, and full of threatening import. But added to these causes, and perhaps in fact even more influential, was a formidable religious movement. It was not long since the Armenian massacres had occurred; Europe had intervened, and yet the Sultan remained unharmed. The Christian

Excitement among the frontier tribes.

armies of Greece had been overwhelmed by the Turkish troops. The Ameer, calling himself the King of Islam, had assumed the position of one of the great heads of Mohammedanism; and everywhere the Mullahs were preaching enthusiastically a holy war. It seemed as if on all sides the power of Islam was rising.

Fortunately there was no great cohesion among the tribes. They broke out one after the other in isolated insurrections. **Various outbreaks among the frontier tribes.** In the Tochi Valley a treacherous attack was made upon Mr. Gee, a political agent, in which he and several officers were killed (June 1897), although the splendid bravery of a detachment of Sikh troops who formed his escort averted a complete disaster. A punitive expedition was sent into the country, but met with no great success. The next scene of disturbance was the Swat Valley lying between Chitral and Peshawur. The tribesmen, excited to enthusiasm by their religious leaders, assaulted the position of Malakand with extraordinary courage (July 26), and were only driven back with great difficulty and heavy loss of life. Again a punitive expedition was necessary. General Binden Blood, with 8000 troops, was sent into the valley. But the hostile tide was only partially checked. The Mohmands, who covered the high road to Peshawur to the north of the Kyber Pass, were the next to rise, and were followed almost immediately by the Afridis, who occupied the Pass itself, and who received allowances for keeping it open, and by the Orakzais, who covered it to the south. The Afridis began by assaulting the fort of Lundi Kotal, garrisoned by the Kyber Rifles, who, though themselves Afridis, offered a gallant but unavailing resistance to the attack. The inability of the English to advance at once and clear the pass encouraged the Orakzais, who in their turn assaulted some lately erected forts on the Samana ridge. The heroic bravery and fidelity of the Indian troops was illustrated by the self-sacrifice of a few soldiers of the 36th Sikh regiment who continued to hold a fort, to which the enemy had set fire, until the last man had perished in the flames.

So general a burst of fanatical hostility required immediate attention, and a body of 60,000 men under Sir William Lockhart was assembled to push its way into the Tirah district. **The Tirah campaign.** It met with the most determined resistance. Pass after pass had to be forced with great difficulty and great loss of life. The Orakzais country was first overrun; and then the troops entered upon the Afridi Tirah. The defence assumed the character which has always attended the entrance of organised armies into wild mountainous

districts. It is admirably described by Sir Hungerford Holdich, the surveying officer of the force. "Neither by night nor by day would the enemy trust themselves to open resistance or solid attack, but by day they could watch from their nests above the valley the scattered threads of transport moving in lines for foraging purposes, the little band of scouts covering the survey party that was making its way slowly up the hillside, working comfortably to within their range; or they could hang about the cliffs and woods whilst an advance in force was in progress, ready to mass themselves with most surprising rapidity on any luckless party that might get involved in the spider-web of nullahs. There was not an army. I doubt whether on any occasion their numbers could be counted into thousands. Certainly no British officer ever counted them. But this small brigade of bandits owed quite as much of their extraordinary mobility to the fewness of their numbers as to their loose organisation and mountaineering instincts. They simply played around the British force, and with the facilities that they possessed of attaining safe cover when too hard pressed, the hunting of them with an army of two divisions was not unlike hunting rabbits with a pack of foxhounds. And yet it is difficult to see how a smaller force could have played havoc with their country, and kept open a line of communications. It was much the same to us whether there were 50,000 or 5000. At all points was it necessary to be prepared for attack." Late events in South Africa have shown with what effect this form of warfare can be employed by a brave people. No doubt the power of Great Britain was exhibited and the hopelessness of prolonged resistance proved, as the British armies forced their way into every valley of importance. But there was little of the halo of victory around the troops as, still subjected to harassing attacks, they made their way down the passes on their return to India. While the army was in the Maidan Valley, the terms offered by Government had been declared. Fines were to be levied, arms to be surrendered, and all Government property to be restored. Great deputations both of the Orakzais and the Afridis listened to the declaration with some show of submission. As the Afridis proved subsequently to be still recalcitrant, many of their villages and towers were destroyed. But in spite of this the terms were still unaccepted when the troops, with a loss of more than 400 killed and 1300 wounded, returned to Peshawur. It was not till October in the following year, 1898, that opposition ceased; the arms were given up, the fines were paid, and the Kyber Pass was reopened.

It was not alone with war that the Government had to contend; in 1897, and again in 1900, famines of the most terrible character wasted vast regions of India, while in the former year a fearful outbreak of plague occurred in the Bombay Presidency, in which no less than 12,000 lives were lost. In both cases the Government undertook the responsibility of attempting to check the disaster and as far as possible to keep the people alive. The famine was unusually widespread. In the Central Provinces, in much of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies, in nearly the whole of the North-West Provinces, and over large areas in the Punjab, and in the native States, it was found necessary to undertake relief measures. More than £500,000 was collected in England to assist in the charitable work, which, carried out according to fixed rules dictated by previous experience, met with some degree of success. In June 1897 there were upwards of 4,000,000 people employed on Government relief works; and even after the first rains had fallen in August, as many as 3,000,000 were still being fed. The rulers of many of the native States followed the English example, and worked well for the preservation of their people. The second famine was even worse than the first. It was combated with even greater energy, and with perhaps greater success. A careful report had been drawn up of all that had happened in 1897, and further elaborate rules had been formulated. But no energy or wise use of experience was sufficient to prevent the recurrence of the terrible disaster. The conditions of life were such that the slightest failure in the crops inevitably produced famine, and a close examination showed that these conditions were not improving. The number of people living upon the barest necessities of life, on the verge of starvation, was found to be increasing rather than diminishing. The risk of famine remains ever present.

Magnificent though the work of English administrators was both in the plague and in the famines, it did not meet with universal gratitude. The very measures taken to alleviate the terrible scourges brought into prominence the ever-recurrent danger of disaffection which besets the British rule in India, and emphasised the line which divides the civilisation of the rulers and the ruled. The stringency of the sanitary measures adopted to check the plague, not perhaps always carried out, in the midst of the crying necessity for haste, with due regard for the sensitive prejudices of the people, produced an outbreak in Poona, in which two English officials lost their lives. The general tone of the native press became violent and aggressive. The danger seemed so great that

Famines and
plague.

Signs of dis-
affection.

repressive legislation was thought necessary. Aided by the return of more prosperous seasons, this measure allayed at all events the outward expression of discontent.

In December 1898 Lord Elgin was succeeded in the Viceroyalty by Lord Curzon. The energetic administration of India

Lord Curzon's
commercial
measures.

does not depend much upon the political bias of its ruler.

Two measures however were taken by Lord Curzon which could scarcely have been possible had a Liberal Ministry been in power. They were indeed of a somewhat speculative character, but are said to have proved successful in their working. One of these measures it was hoped might put an end to a constantly increasing evil. The instability of the price of silver, its unchecked depreciation, and the consequent fall in the rate of exchange between India and England, entailed heavy losses upon the Government itself and upon all who drew their wealth, whether as pensioners or as commercial men, from India. It was determined to introduce a gold currency, of which the English sovereign should be the standard, and to settle permanently the value of the rupee at 1s. 4d. The second measure, also connected with commerce, was the imposition of a countervailing duty on imported bounty-fed sugar. It was primarily in the interests of the Indian sugar industry, which was running the risk of being driven from the market by the importation of cheap European sugar. But in the second place it foreshadowed a policy to which effect was subsequently given by the Government in England, and which met with the hearty support of the Colonial Secretary, who was already mistrusting the doctrines of free-trade, and eager to adopt any plan which he thought would afford relief to the disastrous depression of the West India Islands. As a matter of fact it is by no means certain whether any advantage has attended this policy, which in appearance was somewhat retrograde.

In the light of subsequent events, of all the questions which occupied the attention of the new Ministry by far the most important were those connected with South Africa. The complicated difficulties of the situation seemed to have reached a climax when the news was received in England that on December 30, 1895, Dr. Jameson, the Administrator of Mashonaland, had crossed the western frontier of the Transvaal with a body of troops to support the malcontents of Johannesburg.

There was nothing new in the strained relations between England and the Boers. The retrocession of the Transvaal by Mr. Gladstone in 1881 was largely regarded in England

as an act of magnanimity; but certainly side by side with the highly conscientious motive moving the Ministry, there ran one almost as powerful of a more political character. The whole history of the British possession of South Africa led inevitably to difficulties apparently irremediable. The Dutch colony had been handed over without its consent to a foreign dominion; this mere fact planted a permanent root of discontent among the old inhabitants. The influx of British colonists had never been sufficient to place the new possessors in a numerical majority. The gift of self-government had given effect to this inequality of numbers, and, except in Natal, the majority of the voters were still men of Dutch extraction, the larger portion of the territory was still in Dutch hands. Under such circumstances it was inevitable that a widespread feeling of racial rivalry, not only in the purely Dutch States, but in the colony of Cape Town itself, should have arisen and continued. It was not in the nature of things that the Dutch Afrianders should feel strongly the ties of loyalty to a mother country which was to them not a mother country. Nor had the treatment they had received been such as to strengthen their attachment. The varying waves of colonial policy which had swept over England had created among them a deep feeling of the uncertainty and weakness of the imperial rule; the want of a firm and well-marked line of political action was not conducive to a contented reliance upon the imperial power.

The annexation of the Transvaal had been a bitter shock to Dutch feeling, not only in the Republic itself but also in Cape Colony; its restoration was almost a matter of necessity in face of the hostility it had excited. But whether magnanimous or political, it had won no gratitude; the restrictions contained in the Convention of Pretoria robbed it in the eyes of the Boers of most of its value. At best it was regarded as a step towards that complete independence which the Transvaalers had in view, and which, as they believed, had been granted them by the Sand River Convention of 1852. It was not only the natural discontent of a people under an alien supremacy which made the cleavage between the races. The difference of their political ideals was so great, that the high-flown language frequently used in connection with this subject, the assertion that the contest was between two different forms of civilisation, is scarcely exaggerated. The Dutch farmers, in their isolated lives brought into contact only with inferior races, and deeply imbued with the religious views of a past century, regarded themselves as a chosen people, and in using the word "Republic" used it as a man of the ancient

Restoration of
Transvaal.

The Jameson
Raid.

Origin of the
difficulty.

or the medieval world might have used it. In their lips it was another word for an Oligarchy, and implied equality of rights among a strictly limited class. The strong democratic sentiment which had taken possession of England was wholly alien to them; the notion of equal rights, even among all the white inhabitants, much less among all men whether black or white, was quite beyond their sphere of thought. The stronghold of this feeling of superiority was the Transvaal, which owed its very existence to the action of men who refused to be subject, and who had given up their old position for the express purpose of maintaining their independence and traditional habits. It is not wonderful that there should have arisen among them a belief that the Transvaal, peopled so largely by the Dutch, treated with so wavering a policy by its present holders, and regarded apparently as valuable only in its relation to the more favoured land of India, would sooner or later become an independent State. Meanwhile their dislike of the Englishman, with his democratic ways, his business habits, his pursuit of wealth, and his claim to stand as protector of the native races, was very strong, and was mingled with some degree of contempt. It is only by understanding the circumstances and the hopes of the Dutch Afrianders, and by recognising their concentration in the Transvaal, that South African questions can be rightly interpreted.

The Convention of London in 1884, with the circumstances which led to it, was not calculated either to still the ambition of the Boers or to satisfy their hopes. While restrictions were still maintained which were inconsistent with complete independence, the people of the Transvaal, citizens henceforward of the South African Republic, had been allowed to assume a title which might easily convey to their minds a high idea of their importance. They received the Convention almost avowedly only as a fresh step forward towards independence and the occupation of a paramount position in South Africa. It required constant watchfulness and an attitude of considerable firmness to thwart their repeated efforts to break free from restraint. They were continually attempting to set aside the strict limits which had been set to the Transvaal State. In 1882 and 1883 they had only been prevented from securing new territory in the West by the appearance of Sir Charles Warren with a considerable force, and the absorption of the disputed territory into the British Colony of Bechuanaland. In 1884 their attempt to secure an outlet upon the sea, and the appropriation of Zululand, was only prevented by the annexation of that part of the coast-line by Lord Ripon. When in 1889 the Chartered Company was formed to occupy

Mashonaland, there was every chance that the Company would have been forestalled by a rush of Transvaal farmers; the movement was only checked by the presence of an armed force upon the frontier. But an entirely new complexion was given to their action when the discovery of gold at Johannesburg suddenly changed the Transvaal into the financial centre of South Africa, ^{The discovery of gold.} and seemed to give some prospect of the ultimate realisation of their dream of supremacy. Yet it was this very discovery which proved the cause of their ruin. The knowledge of the presence of gold in the neighbourhood of Johannesburg produced as a matter of course an immediate influx of miners and of speculators, largely of English nationality. The unfitness of the political views of the Boers to meet the exigencies of a modern progressive society at once became apparent. Instead of welcoming and absorbing the new-comers, they merely tolerated their presence for the purpose of using them as a means of adding to the wealth and power of the Burgher Oligarchy. Year by year they put fresh obstacles in the way of naturalisation, a longer time of residence being again and again required.

The "Outlanders," as the new-comers were called, were thus excluded from every vestige of share in political ^{Oppression of the Outlanders.} power, while in numbers they before long surpassed the older inhabitants of Johannesburg, and bore by far the larger share of the taxation. In addition to these grievances, they were called upon for military service, the one thing which above all others they regarded as implying of necessity the rights of citizenship. It was not to be expected that a large body of Englishmen would submit quietly to this treatment. Agitation for reforms soon began, and grew so strong that in 1894 Lord Loch, the High Commissioner, found it necessary to visit President Kruger at Pretoria. Matters were at the moment in such a critical condition, that at the earnest desire of the President he forbore to proceed to Johannesburg lest an outbreak should be the consequence. He contented himself with receiving a deputation from the outlanders, and with attempting to restrain them while fully acknowledging the reality of their grievances. They had naturally expected some immediate improvement in their position when they had thus formally laid their case before the Commissioner, and observed his sympathetic reception of it. But although Lord Loch had gravely warned Mr. Kruger of the risk he was running, his words produced no result except that the Boer Government seems at once to have begun to think of supplying itself with arms and the materials of war, and to contemplate with complacency a struggle with England.

Foiled in his desire to increase the limits of his State, the President proceeded to take steps to secure his financial independence. The Netherlands Railway Company, which had been materially helped by the wealth of Cape Colony and had entered into a contract for certain low terms of carriage as some sort of recompense, no sooner reached the conclusion of this contract than it raised its terms till they became almost prohibitive. Rather than pay them the Cape Town traders sent their goods by wagon across the Vaal river at certain fords or drifts, using the railway only through the Orange State. Mr. Kruger

The drifts
question.

attempted to complete the exclusion of British trade by closing the drifts. He was determined that all the commerce of the Republic should pass through the northern railway and Delagoa Bay. So great was the anger aroused by this action, which took place in the latter part of 1895, that Mr. Chamberlain was compelled to address to the Boer Government what was practically an ultimatum. It was for the moment successful. But the incident gives clear proof of the continuous and determined hostility to the English which existed in the mind of Mr. Kruger. Unable to procure redress for themselves, aware of the strained relations existing with the Home Government, smarting bitterly under the slight forced upon them by their inferior position, the outlanders, or some of them at least, were thinking of something more than mere constitutional action. A revolution, if necessary a forcible revolution, was undoubtedly being planned.

The whole of South Africa was at this time under the influence of the remarkable personality of Mr. Cecil Rhodes. A man of vast wealth acquired by his great business capacities, and with broad imperialist views, he was now Acting-Director of the Chartered Company which ruled Mashonaland, the creation practically of his own genius. He was chairman of the greatest commercial enterprise in South Africa, the De Beer mines at Kimberley, and Premier of Cape Colony. He owed this position to the skill with which he had succeeded in securing the support not only of the English but of the Dutch Afrianders. The union of South Africa under one supreme government was his political object, and he desired that the supreme government should be British. In every respect he was the exact antithesis of the President of the South African Republic; while the one supported the interests of a small aristocratic oligarchy, the other was the avowed champion of democratic progress. It was the establishment of the Chartered Company in Mashonaland which had checked the expansion of the Transvaal; it

was the influence of Mr. Rhodes which seemed to be drawing even the Dutch inhabitants of Cape Colony to the loyal acceptance of the British flag. Not unnaturally he was regarded by Mr. Kruger as his most dangerous enemy. His brother, Colonel Frank Rhodes, who acted as his agent, was among the more prominent reformers in Johannesburg. It was impossible that the grievances of the outlanders there should escape the notice of Mr. Cecil Rhodes. He must have been well acquainted with the movement which it was hoped might remove the chief obstruction to the realisation of his political views. It may be said with some certainty that there was an understanding that when the right hour arrived, the reformers of Johannesburg would receive armed assistance from their fellow-countrymen in Mashonaland. With this view, though ostensibly for the purpose of taking over a portion of Bechuanaland (a step rendered necessary by the progress of the railway from the Cape to Bulawayo), a handful of troops, police and volunteers, had been assembled at Pitsani, close to the western frontier of the Transvaal, under the command of Dr. Jameson, Administrator of Mashonaland.

The reformers in Johannesburg were not skilful conspirators. A day had been fixed for the rising; and Dr. Jameson had been supplied with a letter (which he was to produce when occasion required it), alleging that the lives of the women and children in Johannesburg were in danger, and summoning him to their immediate assistance. But a difference of opinion arose among the leaders of the Outlanders as to what flag was to be raised if they were successful in their outbreak, and the day for the rising was indefinitely postponed while this question was being decided. Mr. Rhodes, wishing to wait until the opportunity was fully ripe, consented to the postponement, and sent a warning to Dr. Jameson, who however preferred to act upon his own judgment. Without a direct summons from the reformers, in fact in opposition to their known wishes, he persisted in crossing the frontier upon the day originally fixed (December 30, 1895). News of the Raid almost immediately reached England, where it was received at first with enthusiasm. For the *Times* had already published the false letter of appeal for help, with which Dr. Jameson had been supplied; and it was as the heroic rescuer of English women and children from the grasp of brutal enemies that the leader of the ill-judged invasion was for the moment regarded. The disappointment which attended the miserable fiasco was proportionately great. Dr. Jameson, although messengers from the High Commissioner ordering his instant return had reached

The Jameson
Raid.

him, and although he received no news of movement at Johannesburg, had insisted on pushing forward. He did not even pursue this headstrong course successfully. Having reached Krugersdorp, instead of marching direct to Johannesburg while the road was still open, he allowed his men to halt and sleep. They awoke to find the neighbouring hills occupied by the Boer commandos in positions too strong to be assailed with success. After a sharp skirmish Dr. Jameson and his party, unable to move forward and exposed on all sides to deadly rifle fire, were forced to surrender, upon a vague or perhaps misunderstood promise that their lives should be spared.

Taken by itself, the Raid was of little importance. A futile and badly managed conspiracy, an ill-judged and unsuccessful filibustering expedition, would scarcely be worthy of notice. But in the then existing relations between England and the Transvaal, its results could not fail to be far-reaching. Although Mr. Chamberlain took instant measures to check and repudiate Dr. Jameson's action, the suspicion that the Home Government had been cognisant of it took firm hold of the mind of Mr. Kruger and his advisers. From this time onwards their hostility to the paramount power and their determination to rid themselves of it at the first opportunity became fixed. On the other hand the Raid struck Mr. Chamberlain's weapon from his hand. It was impossible in the face of this act of violence to press at once for constitutional changes or to vindicate a course of constitutional opposition which seemed so certainly to lead to open rebellion. The behaviour of Mr. Kruger was at the time restrained and dignified. He gave up the captured raiders to be tried by the English; and when sentence of death was passed upon certain of the outlanders, he commuted it, chiefly for money payments. The leaders of the Raid were tried in England under the Foreign Enlistment Act, found guilty and sentenced to various not very long terms of imprisonment. But the real step imperatively called for by such circumstances was not taken.

The one thing necessary was an immediate and searching inquiry in order to clear the Government from all possible suspicion. But the Select Committee of Inquiry appointed by Parliament did not meet until the close of the session of 1896, nor make its report till July 1897, eighteen months after the Raid. Nor when the report appeared was it satisfactory; certain things which should have been examined were omitted, certain telegrams which should have been seen were kept back. There seemed to the ordinary looker-on to be an effort to throw a cloak

Effect of the
Raid.

The Committee
of Inquiry.

over something, it was not clear what, which the leaders of both parties in England desired to keep from publicity. Enough was produced to show that whatever may have been the case with respect to the Colonial Office in London, there was ample ground for the suspicious attitude of the Boer leaders. It was made certain that Mr. Rhodes had used his great power both commercial and political in support of the conspiracy, and that although the High Commissioner had been carefully kept in the dark, his secretary and the chief British official at Pitsani had been informed of what was going on. Even with respect to Mr. Chamberlain himself there was a sharp conflict of evidence, the recollections of one of the witnesses, Dr. Rutherford Harris, being entirely at variance with those of the officials of the Colonial Office. As the sanguine credulity of conspirators is well known, it is probable that Dr. Harris was wrong when he expressed what was undoubtedly his opinion at the time, that "the Colonial Office was in it." Still the actual revelations at the inquiry, coupled with the immunity of Mr. Rhodes from all punishment, the public declaration of Mr. Chamberlain that "there was no stain on the personal honour of Mr. Rhodes," and the very slight sentences which were inflicted on the raiders, were quite sufficient to establish an ineradicable mistrust in the minds of a race naturally inclined to suspicion and prejudice.

Moreover, while avoiding the one step which might have removed this bad impression, and while certainly treating the leaders of the conspiracy with extraordinary leniency, Mr. Chamberlain did not cease his efforts to remove the grievances of the outlanders, in a manner which could not but be most irritating to President Kruger. Before the meeting of Parliament in February 1896 he wrote an elaborate despatch, setting out afresh the claims of the British Government on behalf of the Johannesburgers, recapitulating all the outlanders' grievances, and recommending a plan for the separate municipal government of Johannesburg if it was found impossible to give the outlanders a satisfactory franchise. With the irritation inevitably caused by so gross an insult to his authority as the Raid, Mr. Kruger might well have resented such a despatch even had it been conveyed to him privately. His indignation can be well understood when he found that it had been published in England before it had been delivered to himself. It conveyed among other things a suggestion that Mr. Kruger should come to England to talk matters over. In his reply, after justifiably rebuking Mr. Chamberlain for his "new

Chamberlain's
despatch, Feb.
1896.

vict.

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diplomacy," he declined the suggestion unless the points to be discussed included the famous 4th section of the Convention of London, 1884, in other words unless he was allowed to re-open the whole question of independence.

For awhile it appeared that a deadlock had been reached. And for the moment the attention of Government was directed to a side issue of the Raid, the outbreak in Matabeleland. The withdrawal of the troops and police for the purpose of the Raid had afforded an opportunity for a rising of the natives. The removal of military authority from the Chartered Company and its assumption by the imperial Government which had been thought necessary had created some temporary confusion. The Matabele tribes took advantage of the moment; massacres of the English settlers occurred in various parts of the country, and a general insurrection broke out. Sir Frederick Carrington and Colonel Plumer after much difficult fighting succeeded in getting the upper hand; but the natives were still unconquered in the recesses of the Matoppo Hills behind Bulawayo. Whatever may have been his mistakes, the courage and personal ascendancy of Mr. Rhodes were signally proved at this crisis. With two or three comrades only, and unarmed, he ventured into the fastnesses of the natives, summoned the chiefs to meet him, and by his personal influence induced them to put an end to the war and to accept reasonable terms (August 20, 1896).

Meanwhile, if the position of Mr. Chamberlain had been weakened by the Raid, that of Mr. Kruger had been proportionably strengthened. But instead of seizing the opportunity to carry out such comparatively slight measures of reform as might have satisfied the hopes of the depressed community at Johannesburg, he preferred to follow a policy of aggression. His determination to vindicate the position of the Transvaal as an independent international State became hardened. After his re-election to the Presidency in the spring of 1896, he entirely disregarded the vague promises to "forget and forgive," which he had made (January 10) when the memory of the Raid was still fresh. In flagrant contravention of the 1884 treaty, laws were passed changing the position of aliens considerably for the worse, while several treaties were contracted with foreign Powers without the sanction of the English Crown. The mining and commercial population were harassed by still larger taxation, a profound corruption reigned unchecked in every branch of the administration. All this was the more aggravating because Mr. Kruger had himself caused the

The Matabele rising, March 1896.

Kruger's position.

Volksraad to appoint an Industrial Committee to inquire into and remedy the grievances of the miners, and when its report proved unfavourable to his wishes, had succeeded in rendering it entirely nugatory. And all this time he continued steadily to pursue the one great object he had set before him. He sent missions to Europe in order to win the interest of foreign Powers. He made a treaty with the Orange Free State, with which England had no sort of quarrel, pledging that State to throw in its lot with the Transvaal. Intrigues with the Dutch in Cape Colony welded the interest of the Dutch race into one. Vast sums spent on munitions of war prepared the way for the ousting of British influence and for the establishment of a Dutch South African Republic.

For nearly two years the English Government contented itself with diplomatic protests against the infringement of the Convention. But towards the end of 1897 Mr. Chamberlain's protest. Chamberlain seems to have thought that the partial paralysis caused by the Raid had lasted long enough. The President of the Transvaal had demanded foreign arbitration with respect to the Convention, thereby implicitly assuming the international status of his country. To this, on the 16th of October, Mr. Chamberlain replied in a long despatch, in which he raised to its full value the British claim of suzerainty, declared that it was still an integral part of the London Convention, and that not even in the matter of arbitration could Great Britain allow of foreign interference.

Already, in the preceding May, an important change had been made by the appointment of Sir Alfred Milner to the post of High Commissioner in the place of Lord Rosmead (Sir Hercules Robinson). The outgoing Commissioner had been in office during the Raid, he had been tricked and deceived by the conspirators, had sympathised with the irritation of President Kruger, and had practically refused to carry out certain high-handed suggestions of the Colonial Office which he regarded as vitiated by the conduct of the raiders. If there had been a lull in active diplomacy, it was probably due to his persuasions. He withdrew on the plea of ill-health, and Sir Alfred Milner, a much younger man, of high academic reputation which had been justified by his successful work in Egypt, and who was now holding the important post of Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, was selected to succeed him. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the renewed activity of the Colonial Office was largely due to the very definite views which the examination of the affairs of South Africa raised in the mind of the

Appointment of Sir Alfred Milner.

new-comer. They were not formed hurriedly. Sir Alfred Milner pursued his study of the problem before him with careful industry, even learning the Dutch language for the purpose of acquiring his knowledge first hand. In March 1898, when he had arrived at a sufficiently distinct conclusion, he publicly urged upon the Dutch in Cape Colony the duty of using their influence to obtain reforms in the Transvaal, and to remove the wholly ungrounded suspicion that England had hostile designs upon that country. He pleaded in vain.

The Government of the Transvaal continued its course, the grievances of the people of Johannesburg grew heavier and heavier. Unquestionably the agitation, which naturally resulted from oppression, like other political agitations was aggravated by exaggeration. Unquestionably it was kept up and increased by the support of rich men from outside. But the grievances were very real, and the outlanders were not, as was frequently asserted, a mere body of reckless speculators, but in large proportion were men who intended to be resident citizens of the State, and who proved by their subsequent conduct during the war that they were possessed of sterling qualities. The death of a man of the name of Edgar, who was pistolled apparently unnecessarily in the presence of his wife by a Transvaal policeman as he was arresting him, afforded the opportunity for a decisive step. The grievances were now formulated in a great petition addressed to the Queen, signed by nearly 22,000 of the inhabitants, begging for the intervention of the British Government. The petition, which received the support of large numbers of British subjects in other parts of the colony, reached the Colonial Office on April 14, 1899. It set forth at length the oppression to which the inhabitants of the Rand had been subject since 1895, the deprivation of all political rights, the heavy taxation, the misapplication of the revenue, the maladministration and pecculation, the impossible conditions to which the education of the outlander children was subjected, the inadequacy and recklessness of the police. To this was added the restraint put upon the "inherent and inalienable birthright of every British subject, his right to petition his sovereign." On these grounds the petitioners besought her Majesty's protection, and begged that inquiry might be made and measures taken "to insure the speedy reform of the abuses complained of," and to obtain substantial guarantees from the Transvaal Government for the recognition of their rights as British subjects.

Mr. Chamberlain issued his reply on the 10th of May. He had meanwhile received by telegraph a long, important and decisive despatch

from the High Commissioner. In it Sir Alfred Milner declared that the case for intervention was overwhelming. The policy of leaving things alone had been tried for years and had only led to their going from bad to worse. This, he said, was not owing to the Raid. "They were going from bad to worse before the Raid. We were on the verge of war before the Raid, and the Transvaal was on the verge of revolution. The effect of the Raid had been to give the policy of leaving things alone a new lease of life and with the old consequences." The advice of the High Commissioner, confirming as it did his former convictions, removed all doubt from the mind of the Colonial Minister. He determined to intervene and to intervene firmly. It is plain after the event that war was the necessary consequence. But the Government still hoped that strong pressure might induce Mr. Kruger to yield. After expressing a desire "to maintain cordial relations with the South African Republic," they urged that a meeting should be arranged "for the purpose of discussing the situation in a conciliatory spirit, in the hope of arriving at such an arrangement as her Majesty's Government could accept and recommend to the Outlander population as a reasonable concession to their just demands."

On the 31st of May a Conference was opened at Bloemfontein between President Kruger and Sir Alfred Milner. It is unnecessary to follow the negotiations closely. The concluding passages of Sir Alfred Milner's despatch clearly show the real point at issue both at this time and when war supervened, and the only step which he thought might possibly avert it. "The spectacle of thousands of British subjects kept permanently in the position of helots, constantly chafing under undoubted grievances, and calling vainly to her Majesty's Government for redress, does steadily undermine the influence and reputation of Great Britain and the respect for the British Government within the Queen's dominions. A certain section of the press, not in the Transvaal only, preaches openly and constantly the doctrine of a Republic embracing all South Africa, and supports it by menacing references to the armaments of the Transvaal, its alliance with the Orange Free State, and the active sympathy which in the case of war it would receive from a section of her Majesty's subjects. I regret to say that this doctrine, supported as it is by a ceaseless stream of malignant lies about the intentions of the British Government, is producing a great effect upon a large number of our Dutch fellow-colonists. Language is frequently used which seems to imply that the Dutch have some superior right even in this colony to their

Chamberlain's
reply.

Lord Milner's
despatch.

fellow-citizens of British birth. Thousands of men peaceably disposed, and, if let alone, perfectly satisfied with their position as British subjects, are being drawn into disaffection, and there is a corresponding exasperation on the side of the British. I can see nothing which will put a stop to this mischievous propaganda but some striking proof of the intention of her Majesty's Government not to be ousted from its position in South Africa. And the best proof alike of its power and its justice would be to obtain for the Uitlanders in the Transvaal a fair share in the government of the country which owes everything to their exertions. It could be made perfectly clear that our action was not directed against the existence of the Republic. We should be only demanding the re-establishment of rights which now exist in the Orange Free State, and which existed in the Transvaal itself at the time of, and long after, the withdrawal of British sovereignty. It would be no selfish demand, as other Uitlanders besides those of British birth would benefit by it. It is asking for nothing from others which we do not give ourselves. And it would certainly go to the root of the political unrest in South Africa, and though temporarily it might aggravate, it would ultimately extinguish, the race feud which is the great bane of the country."

The point at issue was in fact the maintenance of British supremacy in South Africa; the only possible cure was such an alteration in the franchise as would render immediately possible a complete change in the policy hitherto pursued by the Transvaal. The franchise thus became the one great point of discussion at the Conference. Anxious to gain a little time, the President suggested various schemes, all of which were and could be easily shown to be futile for the desired purpose, but which were cleverly conceived to raise the idea that the British Government was in an overbearing manner pressing for insignificant points and had already determined upon violent measures. Many people found it difficult at the time to avoid this conclusion. The diplomacy of Mr. Chamberlain did not appear conciliatory, the suspicion with which every proposition of the Boers was received, the uncertainty of the legal aspect of the case, led many to believe that greater tact and a more sympathetic treatment of the question might have avoided war. Such a view was an error. With two nations of entirely different aspirations facing each other, led by two men of masterful and obstinate character, and both of them underrating the military strength of their opponents, war was from the first inevitable, though when it came it came somewhat as a surprise and from the quarter whence it was least expected. The last of Mr. Kruger's offers with respect to the franchise raised the real

Conference at
Bloemfontein.

question at issue. He offered a five years' franchise, which was what England had been demanding, but appended conditions virtually annihilating the suzerainty of England and declaring the complete independence of the Transvaal. The conditions were of course declined, and the offer was withdrawn. Attempts to get the offer renewed without the conditions proved useless, and the Government declared themselves "obliged to consider the situation afresh," and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement.

Meanwhile it had become quite obvious that if there was a war it would be a war of races. Mr. Steyn, President of the Orange Free State, had intervened. He complained that imperial troops were massing upon the borders of his State. He refused to listen to the reply that this was merely a counter-step against the armed measures of the Boers, and finally induced his Volksraad to pass a declaration that there was no cause for war, that if it was begun by her Majesty's Government it would be calamitous and criminal, and that the Free State would throw in its lot with the South African Republic. Things had come to such a pass that in September troops had been ordered out both from India and from England. Small though the reinforcements were, they were yet sufficient to make the Boers a little uncertain as to that complete superiority of their arms on which they had relied; and on the 9th of October Mr. Reiz, the State Secretary of the Transvaal, handed in a lengthy and angry ultimatum, demanding that all the troops on the borders of the Republic should be instantly withdrawn, that all the reinforcements which had arrived since June should be removed, and that the troops now on the high seas should not be allowed to land. A reply was to be given not later than 5 p.m. on the 11th of October. If the reply was not favourable "the Transvaal Government would be compelled to regard the action of her Majesty's Government as a formal declaration of war." It is needless to say that such an ultimatum was at once refused; and Mr. Steyn having notified that he intended to carry out the late resolution of the Volksraad, the inevitable war began. The Boer commandos at once crossed the frontier in three directions, entering Natal on the 12th of October by Laing's Nek from the Transvaal, while from the Orange State they advanced westward, besieging Kimberley and Mafeking, and southward towards Stormberg.

Though the evidence given before the Commission of Inquiry, appointed after the end of the war, has brought to light the shortcomings of the War Office, the Report

Intervention of
Mr. Steyn.

Boer ultima-
tum, Oct. 9.

Negligence of
the Cabinet.

has rightly laid the blame of the disastrous opening of the war upon the Cabinet as a whole. They had been fully warned. The Intelligence Department, the officers in command on the spot, and the military experts at home had all joined in bringing to the knowledge of the Ministry the threatening state of military preparation in the Transvaal, the aggressive temper of the Boers, the certainty that the Orange State would make common cause with their Dutch compatriots, and the desperate character which a war in South Africa was likely to assume; yet the sudden ultimatum and the immediate action taken upon it came with all the effect of a surprise. The troops, whether in Natal or in Cape Colony, were wholly insufficient for the purposes of aggressive defence, though they barely succeeded in warding off the disaster of a triumphant and successful invasion. The preparations both at home and in the Colony for sustaining a lengthened and important war were totally inadequate. Such easily understood requirements as abundant ammunition, a proper reserve of equipments, and a supply of trustworthy maps, were all wanting. No means had been taken to counteract or rival the well-known mobility of the Boer commandos. The artillery proved deficient in quality. But in all this there was nothing new, nothing which has not characterised the opening of every considerable war in which Great Britain has taken part. The country, leaning upon its wealth and industrial development, always regards a great or offensive war as a thing too improbable, and too far off, to demand attention. It is satisfied with the care of what it regards as a sufficient guarantee for safety, its naval preponderance, the excellence and high organisation of the fleet, which it speaks of as the first line, but which it really believes to be the only necessary line, of defence. If Great Britain is to be ready to carry on military operations on a large scale either in Europe or elsewhere, there is no doubt that the military system and the War Office which is charged with its administration must be thoroughly revised.

But in the present instance the charge of unreadiness was not a military but a political charge, and arose from an entire misconception by the Cabinet of the importance of the war, and from a persistent conviction of some of its chief members that there would be no war at all. Everything points to the belief that the negotiators were throughout convinced that the Boers would so far yield to pressure as to accept a position which might satisfy the demands of empire. The openness and roughness of the diplomacy rested upon this conviction. It was the game of the bully. When it proved a losing game, and when the Cabinet was forced to

Conviction that there would be no war.

recognise the truth of the many indications of inflexible determination shown by the Boers, it came upon them as a surprise and with the necessary consequences of a surprise. It must not however be forgotten that throughout the negotiations the Ministers were in a position implying an awkward dilemma. Any signs of warlike preparations or increase of troops would inevitably risk their negotiations, any absence of such preparations would inevitably give the Boers the initiative if the negotiations failed. They chose one horn of the dilemma, with the necessary consequence that the initiative passed out of their hands.

The chief danger was at first in Natal. It was thought desirable to defend the extreme north of the Colony in the ^{Beginning of the war.} direction of Laing's Nek. From a military point of view the determination was unwise; for the north of Natal consisted of a triangular tongue of mountainous and difficult country running up between the Transvaal and the Orange State, and thus open to assault from both sides. Political reasons, the fear of the disheartening effect on the Colony of the occupation by the Boers of any part of its territory, and the great risk that the Zulus would throw in their lot with the advancing enemy, were urgently pressed upon Sir George White, then in command of the forces in Natal. He yielded, and allowed General Penn Symons to hold Glencoe, while he himself concentrated the bulk of the army in the town of Ladysmith. On the 15th of October the Boers, having occupied Newcastle, made an effort to surround and cut off the troops in Glencoe. They were checked by a brilliant engagement at Talana Hill (October 20), but the victory was attended not only by the loss of General Penn Symons, but by the capture of a considerable body of cavalry and mounted infantry who, pressing too far forward, found themselves surrounded and taken off to Pretoria. Nor was the victory sufficient to check the Boer advance. A second victorious encounter fought under General French at Elandslaagte (October 21) was equally ineffective. General Yule, who had succeeded Penn Symons, found it necessary to leave his sick and wounded behind at Dundee, where they were well cared for by the Boers, and to withdraw his forces by a somewhat circuitous route to join the headquarters at Ladysmith. The movement was covered by Sir George White, who met the enemy on the 24th of October at Rietfontein. Though this engagement was successful in its object of allowing the troops under Yule to reach Ladysmith, it did not check the Boer advance. In great strength, probably twice as numerous as the British troops, they surrounded the town, enclosing within it Sir George White and his army of about 12,000

men, and then moved the rest of their forces onwards till they reached the Tugela river and threatened to overrun the whole colony. An attempt on the part of Sir George White to loosen their hold on Ladysmith led to a serious disaster a few days later. Colonel Carleton was sent on a night march towards Nicholson's Nek, in the hope of turning the enemy's flank. He apparently marched into



a well-planned ambush. Stones, rolled down from the hills, stampeded his ammunition mules; his troops were compelled to retire to a neighbouring hill, where they fought for five hours till, their ammunition being exhausted, surrender was forced upon them, and 900 more prisoners fell into the hands of the Boers (October 30).

This disastrous opening of the campaign was chiefly due to the false

position in which the British forces had been placed, a position which could have been allowed by the military only on an absolute misconception as to the strength of their opponents. It was with astonishment that the British artillery found itself entirely outranged by the artillery of the Boers; and the situation at Ladysmith was only saved by the timely arrival of a contingent from the fleet (November 2), bringing with it more effective ordnance. When Sir Redvers General Buller, a man in whom the strongest reliance was felt, ^{General Buller's arrival.}

was placed in command, and it was known that an army corps was already on its way to reinforce the troops, it was believed in England, in despite of the want of success in withstanding the Boer advance, that the danger was but temporary and that the year might well see the conclusion of the war. The vanity of this hope was soon discovered. The first duty of the troops as they arrived was to relieve the two beleaguered garrisons at the opposite ends of the frontier line, and at the same time to check the Boer commandos which had crossed the Orange river and were finding assistance from their Dutch brethren within Cape Colony. The condition of things in Natal was so threatening that General Buller thought his presence there necessary. The advance towards Kimberley was intrusted to Lord Methuen. General Gatacre was given the exceedingly difficult task of clearing with quite inadequate troops the northern frontier of Cape Colony and the districts around Stormberg.

In all three directions misfortune met the British arms. Lord Methuen, having won a distinct victory at Belmont ^{Magersfontein, Dec. 10, 11.} (November 22), and having forced the line of the Modder river with considerable loss, found himself confronted by the army of Commandant Cronje occupying the strong position of Magersfontein. He attempted his assault on the night of the 10th of December, hoping to fall upon the Boers by surprise. Such night marches, though much favoured by the generals in this war, are peculiarly liable to mishap. A warning, perhaps given by Boer spies, perhaps by the accidental discharge of a rifle, allowed the enemy to penetrate the design. In the darkness the Highland Brigade had been brought too close to the trenches before assuming open order; the men were but half deployed when a murderous and overwhelming fire was opened on them. They were reduced to seek shelter, but remained at close quarters with the enemy until at one o'clock in the following afternoon one of the regiments could bear it no longer and retired some 500 yards. The battle had spread in other directions, but the assault had failed. Lord Methuen in his despatch writes, "The

retirement was unfortunate, for the enemy were at this time quitting the trenches by tens and twenties. The men in the Highland Brigade were ready enough to rally, but the paucity of officers rendered this no easy matter. I attach no blame to this splendid Brigade." However this may have been, Lord Methuen's great attempt had proved a failure, and had cost more than 800 men.

On the very same day General Gatacre, constantly urged by the Commander-in-Chief at Cape Town to make an advance, and hoping to compensate for the deficiency of his forces by somewhat rash tactics, was attempting to dislodge his opponents at Stormberg by a movement of a similar character. In the night of the 9th of December he led a force of about 3000 men from Molteno, with the intention of turning the right flank of the enemy. His guides deceived him. He persisted none the less in pushing on, and found himself suddenly face to face with a foe already expecting him, and in a strong position. His men were much wearied with the long night march, and after a gallant attempt to drive the enemy from the hills, were forced to withdraw. The retreat was disastrous. Broken by fatigue, and constantly under the fire of the Boers from the neighbouring hills, it was with the loss of more than 600 men taken prisoners, besides 80 killed and wounded, that the column regained Molteno.

Five days later began the series of operations which ultimately resulted in the relief of Ladysmith. But that object was not attained till after many failures, the effect of which was very painful to the vanity of the English people. The evidence taken by the Commission of Inquiry throws much light upon the reasons for these failures. Sir Redvers Buller had not full confidence in his troops. He found himself face to face with a most difficult military problem and supplied with forces insufficient in number and entirely unused to war. From his own evidence it would seem as though his first operations were intended rather to train his troops than to attain the immediate object, the relief of Ladysmith. Unwilling to expose his untried men to the difficulties of bush fighting, he avoided an attack upon the left or eastern part of the Boer position, which proved subsequently to be the easiest road towards the beleaguered town. Believing that he could cross the Tugela and find beyond it an advanced position offering some safety and some room for the movements of his troops, he determined to attack Colenso. He says himself that he never went so far as to give orders for an attack, but had only pointed out the positions he wished his troops to occupy. The

Gatacre's
defeat at
Stormberg.

Colenso,
Dec. 15.

Brigade upon the left under General Hart advancing beyond the indicated position came under fire and was involved in battle. While withdrawing them, Buller received information that upon the right his artillery had also been pushed into an untenable position; men and horses were shot down at long range and perhaps also from the thickets in the immediate neighbourhood. All efforts to rescue the guns proved unavailing and no less than eleven had to be abandoned. The check was so severe that Buller considered it inexpedient to renew the attack.

Within a week the British arms had thus sustained three sharp reverses. No wonder that complaints were heard in England of the incapacity of the Generals; but neither the people nor the Government were dismayed. As is not unusual in the case of English wars, want of immediate success called out the latent combativeness of the nation. The number of those who spoke against the war grew less, the determination to bring it to a successful end grew sterner. The Government, fully aware at last of the ridiculous misconceptions under which it had entered upon the war, with reckless lavishness now poured troops into the Colony. Seven Divisions had already been mobilised and despatched. An eighth Division was now constructed. Volunteers were called for from the Yeomanry and the volunteer regiments. The colonies, who from the first had exhibited their loyalty to the empire by offering and despatching the small contingent of troops which were at that time considered sufficient, were earnestly requested to send more mounted men. But, more important still, it was recognised that the war in Natal gave work enough to Sir Redvers Buller, and Lord Roberts, with Lord Kitchener as his Chief of the Staff, was appointed to the chief command, and intrusted with the advance through the Orange State.

Almost immediately after the arrival of Lord Roberts, Sir Redvers Buller made his second attempt. Again the evidence before the Commission throws much light upon what happened. But the light is broken and perplexing, because the two generals on whom the ultimate responsibility must rest give very different versions of the events themselves and interpret them in a very different spirit. Buller's plan seems to have been to make a wide turning movement towards his west or left flank and to reach what he believed to be comparatively level ground at Acton Homes behind the Boer defences of the Tugela. Meanwhile a direct attack of the nature of a feint was to be made upon the passage of the river known as

Renewed
efforts.

Lord Roberts'
arrival.

Spion Kop.
Jan. 23.

Potgieter's Drift. The whole of this movement was placed in the hands of Sir Charles Warren. Understanding that he was intrusted with an independent command, he used his discretion in the interpretation of the general orders given him. Believing that the country round Acton Homes was unfavourable for the intended operations, he restricted the turning movement within much narrower limits than those which Buller had suggested. The plan as thus conceived required the occupation of a ridge extending westward from Spion Kop, and of that mountain itself, the capture of which had not been originally contemplated. General Buller was however himself present and accepted though unwillingly the change of plan. The attack was postponed for a day in order to allow the ground to be reconnoitred, but on the night of the 23rd of January the troops under the immediate command of General Woodgate occupied Spion Kop with little loss. The surface of the hill did not lend itself well to entrenchments, nor were such as were erected very satisfactorily placed. The troops upon the summit found themselves exposed to a terrible fire from the adjoining hills and the loss was very great. The pressure was so strong that Buller thought it necessary, on the death of General Woodgate, so far to interfere with the arrangements of his lieutenant as to order him to put Colonel Thorneycroft in command with the rank of Brigadier-General, over the heads of the officers to whom the command would naturally have fallen. He selected Thorneycroft as being a trustworthy fighting man. Though exposed to a fearful fire and tortured by thirst, the troops courageously held their position during the whole day, in the midst of a carnage rendered all the more terrible by the narrow limits within which it was concentrated. Sir Charles Warren, acting as he tells us under the direction of General Buller which he recognises as wise, did not himself visit the hill, and communication appears to have been very difficult and much interrupted. He had no idea of relinquishing the position. Reinforcements and engineers with the necessary material for entrenchments were actually advancing up the mountain when they were met by the defenders in full retreat. The slaughter had been so great, the chance of bringing guns to the summit or of successfully handling them when there appeared so slight, that Thorneycroft had thought it wise to order a retirement. It seems uncertain whether the position might not have been safely reoccupied on the following morning. Lord Roberts considered that it would have been possible to re-establish the position during the night and blames Thorneycroft for withdrawing. After the withdrawal Sir Redvers Buller himself took over the

command, and a safe and orderly retreat across the Tugela was accomplished. It is perhaps useless to apportion the blame of this dearly bought disaster. As sometimes happens bravery lost its reward because "some one had blundered." In the judgment of Lord Roberts, want of energy in Warren, want of decision in Buller, and want of tenacity in Thorneycroft, combined to produce the unfortunate result.

Whatever may have been the mistakes Buller committed, he did not fail in dogged persistency. Ten days afterwards Valkranz,
Feb. 5. he attempted for the third time to break through the Boer lines. On this occasion he selected an opening a little further to the east, and succeeded in driving the enemy from a ridge of hills known as Valkranz. Nor were the Boers able to dislodge him. But closer examination led to the opinion that further advance would have brought the troops under a fire too heavy to have been resisted; and once more General Buller withdrew behind the Tugela.

Meanwhile, on the other scene of the war, Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener had been busily engaged in organising what The relief of
Kimberley. the direct invasion of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. But Kimberley had first to be relieved. The army under Lord Roberts had been concentrated to the south of the Modder river, and while General Methuen continued to face Cronje's army, a force of 5000 horsemen and two divisions of infantry were collected some thirty miles to the south. The enemy, already misled by a temporary advance of a brigade under Sir Hector Macdonald towards the west, were still further deceived by this movement of troops towards the south-east. The forces thus collected were placed under General French. Sweeping round the beleaguering army, he crossed the Riet and the Modder rivers before any serious effort could be made to intercept him. Leaving the infantry to hold the ground he had covered, the cavalry pressed on with extreme rapidity and reached Kimberley on February 15. The Boer forces at once withdrew, and the long siege was at an end. For four months the garrison and townspeople had held out under the skilful management of Colonel Kekewich. Mr. Rhodes, who had gone to Kimberley at the outbreak of the war, charged himself with the defence of the mines, and by a judicious use of his wealth and by finding employment for the poorer inhabitants did much to alleviate their sufferings. Though the siege, as a military operation, presented no striking features, it played a considerable part of the general plan of the campaign. The presence of Mr. Rhodes in the town gave it a fictitious

value in the eyes of the Boers; and the forces under the command of Cronje, which might otherwise have been a source of great danger, remained practically useless around it while Lord Roberts was completing his plans.

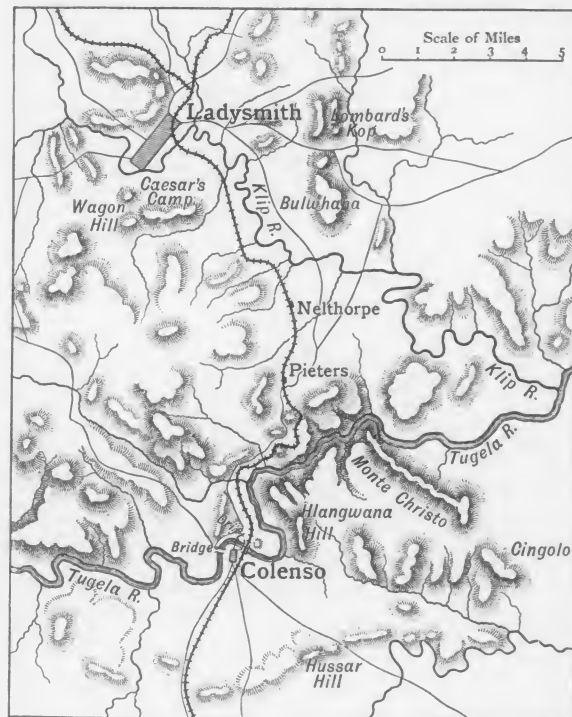
The relief of Kimberley was however but a side issue of the greater operations of the campaign. With General Cronje's surrender, Feb. 27. French's troops between him and Kimberley, and aware of the intentions of Lord Roberts, Cronje at once retired with great rapidity up the Modder river towards Bloemfontein. An exciting race between him and his pursuers brought him to Paardeberg, where he found that he had been outstripped and that the British troops lay all around him. He took up a position in the bed of the river (February 17). And there, with their women and children huddled in wagons or sheltered in burrows scooped in the sand, he and his followers held out under a fearful artillery fire for more than a week. Gradually the ring of his assailants closed round him, and at length the occupation by some of the Canadians of a position commanding the river bed (February 26) and the hideous condition of his camp from the destruction wrought by the artillery upon his horses and cattle, drove him to surrender. He capitulated unconditionally, and with his whole army of 4000 men was at once despatched to St. Helena.

This great surrender was followed by the occupation of Bloemfontein. The resistance offered to the advance of the troops from Paardeberg was overcome without much difficulty. But the hardships of the whole march had been severe. While in the act of carrying out his great operation, Lord Roberts had been nearly crippled by the unfortunate loss of a large convoy of provisions (February 15). In full reliance on his troops however he had proceeded with his work, and though reduced to half and even to quarter rations, his men had not failed him. But once arrived at Bloemfontein, a period of rest and recruitment was a matter of absolute necessity; the horses were worn out, supplies had to be brought up from the Cape. For six weeks the army lay in apparent idleness, an unfortunate necessity, as it prevented Lord Roberts from taking immediate advantage of the disorganisation of the enemy, and allowed the Boers time to recover their shaken courage.

The rapid advance towards Bloemfontein and the critical situation of the Boer leader at Paardeberg had somewhat lessened the grip of the Boers upon Ladysmith. A certain number of them had been called off into the Orange

Buller's last effort, Feb. 14-28.

State to attempt to save Cronje from his fate. But too much stress has been laid upon this; there were still abundance of burghers left to hold the Colenso position which had hitherto proved impregnable.



Walker & Cockerell sc.

General Buller had spoken of having found out at last the key of the position, when he occupied Vaalkranz. His words at the time were over sanguine, but a few weeks later a fresh effort was made, and the words proved true. Much hard work and hard fighting had

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changed the untried lads of a few months before into an army of veterans; he could now venture to undertake what he had then shrunk from, an attack upon the weak point in the Boer position, their eastern or left flank. At Colenso the river Tugela makes a sharp angle to the north and then again resumes its south-easterly course. This crook in the river was occupied by the Hlangwana Hill. The Boers had been allowed to cross the river and fortify this hill, which thus formed the eastern end of their position. The defenders of the hill would, if it was assaulted, have the disadvantage of fighting with the river behind them, and there would necessarily be some difficulty in reinforcing them. If captured, the hill enfiladed and commanded the whole Colenso position. It was to effect this capture that the army, after a few days of rest and almost at the same time that Cronje's forces were entangled at Paardeberg, was launched upon its fourth and final effort to relieve Ladysmith, an effort which entailed fourteen days of constant and costly fighting.

Quite at the extreme left and beyond the lines of the Boers, two hills, Monte Christo and Cingolo, commanded the Hlangwana Hill, just as that hill itself commanded the Colenso position. These two hills were taken with but slight resistance, and on the following day (February 19) the enemy was driven from Hlangwana itself. It would seem that there was a general belief, in which Buller shared, that this capture was so decisive that the enemy would at once withdraw, and that no opposition would be offered except by a weak rearguard; he therefore stopped his flanking movement, brought his troops and guns across the river a little to the north of Colenso, and determined to push his way straight to Ladysmith, following the line of railway. This sanguine view was soon dissipated by bitter experience. Three hills lay across the approach to the city. The assault of the first of these was entrusted to General Hart with the Irish Brigade, and was carried out with desperate bravery (February 22). But the assailants were unable to reach the trenches, and had to content themselves, after the loss of half their number, with holding grimly on, in a position affording some slight shelter about 400 yards from the enemy. Warned, by this check, of the continued difficulty of a direct forward march, General Buller resumed his former strategy, recrossed the river, and again turning the Boer left flank, captured the most eastern of the three hills which, barring the direct advance by the railway, were known as the Pieter's position. The possession of this

hill, as in the case of Hlangwana, rendered the defence of the other two impossible. A simultaneous assault upon them drove the Boers to flight, and for the first time since the operations had begun victory fell to the lot of the British.

The hope of saving Ladysmith was on the point of realisation. It was even nearer than either troops or general imagined. The wide plain which spread from the back of the Pieter's Hill, Feb. 27. Pieter's position was intersected by ridges, and the great Bulwana mountain overhanging Ladysmith was still in the hands of the enemy. Another great battle seemed necessary. But in truth the Boers had been thoroughly beaten and understood their defeat; they were rapidly withdrawing with all their wagons and guns. The English cavalry advancing to reconnoitre found no obstacle in the way, and Lord Dundonald, galloping forward with a few squadrons, was able to join hands with the enfeebled but steadfast garrison (February 28). The relief came none too soon; 118 days of constant bombardment, aggravated by semi-starvation and the ravages of enteric fever, had so weakened the garrison that at the close of the siege no more than 2000 men, described as tottering under the weight of their rifles, could be collected to keep up even a semblance of pursuit upon the retiring Boers. Among the many glorious recollections of the British army the lengthened defence of Ladysmith will always find a place. Sir George White, when once he had determined that the proper strategy to adopt was to hold the town and thus to keep the enemies employed who would otherwise have overrun South Natal, conducted the defence with great skill, and was well seconded by the courage of his troops and the patience of the residents. On first finding himself compelled to fall back and occupy the town, he had thought of attempting offensive measures of defence. But warned by his ill success at Nicholson's Nek (October 30), he contented himself with occupying a widespread defensive position, and there awaited relief. It is said that 16,000 shells fell within the lines. The inhabitants found shelter in holes dug in the banks of the river. The number of men admitted to the hospital during the investment nearly equalled the number of the whole beleaguered army. Before the relief arrived ammunition was running short, and even the supply of horse flesh was failing. Several assaults had been repulsed. One of these, on the 6th of January, when the hills to the south of the position were attacked with a desperate bravery which threatened for a while to be successful, was one of the few instances of close personal fighting which occurred during the war. If the tenacity and courage of the besieged had been great, the loss of the relieving army tells a tale of

persistent bravery in the face of overwhelming difficulties. The loss in killed and wounded in Buller's army during its four attempts was more than 5000, nearly 20 per cent. of its whole number. Questions may be raised as to the wisdom of the strategy and tactics employed; but it remains certain that the greatest difficulty of the whole war had been successfully encountered, and that the General retained to the end the confidence and admiration of his troops.

The pursuit was not pressed. The Boers withdrew with baggage and artillery to a position on the Biggarsberg south of Laing's Nek. Thither Buller followed them, and after three months, during which he was awaiting the developments of the war in the Orange State, by some well-arranged movements he brought his army into the Transvaal and compelled the further withdrawal of the enemy (June 12).

Meanwhile the enforced idleness of the army at Bloemfontein encouraged the Free Staters to resume the offensive. The scene of their activity was in the south and east, where Christian De Wet first gave proof of his extraordinary ability as a partisan leader. The advance of Lord Roberts had allowed the British troops in the north of Cape Colony to push across the Orange river. At Bethulie the bridge, saved by the gallantry of Captain Popham and Lieutenant Grant, who succeeded in withdrawing dynamite charges placed for its destruction, was used by General Gatacre in his advance to Springfontein, while Colonel Brabant with the Colonial troops (March 11) crossed at Aliwal, and sending forward part of his force along the Basuto border, occupied Wepener. From Bloemfontein itself a force had proceeded eastward, had captured the waterworks, about 25 miles from the city, and still pushing forward had occupied Thabanchu. The north-eastern districts of the Orange State were still occupied by the Boer commandos. Towards the end of March they began to renew their activity. Colonel Broadwood was compelled to retire from Thabanchu, and crossing as he believed in perfect safety the plain which led to Bloemfontein, suddenly found himself in an ambush carefully laid in the bed of a stream, at Sannah's Post, and there lost 180 wagons of his convoy, 7 guns, and 426 prisoners. Worse than the actual loss was the occupation by the Boers of the waterworks, obliging as it did the troops in Bloemfontein to use the inferior water of the town, and thus adding fresh violence to the outbreak of enteric fever already raging.

Four days later a party of about 2000 of the same troops who had ambushed Broadwood, passing southward, surrounded a detachment, consisting of three companies of Irish

Sannah's Post,
March 31.

Reddersburg,
April 4.

Rifles and two of mounted infantry, drawn from General Gatacre's force, and compelled them to surrender at Reddersburg. The disaster at Sannah's Post and the withdrawal of General Colville's division from Thabanchu had left these companies uncovered. They were ordered to withdraw, and during the operation were surrounded by the Boers. Without guns, without water, and having lost most of their officers, the men, after holding out for two days upon some kopjes which they had occupied, were driven to surrender. Though General Gatacre, on receiving information of their danger, had collected troops with extreme rapidity for their rescue, he was too late, and 550 more prisoners fell into the hands of the Boers. It was a most disastrous week. But at least it taught the English that the country was not yet conquered, that it was unsafe to wander in small detachments, and that some concentration for defence was a matter of necessity.

One characteristic in the generalship of Lord Roberts was his capacity for disregarding small reverses, and of fixing his attention upon the great essentials. As the loss of his convoy had in no wise checked his march upon Bloemfontein, so now, in spite of Sannah's Post and Reddersburg, he continued unmoved to prepare for his advance to Pretoria. The Orange Free State was declared to be annexed to the British empire, and became the Orange River Colony. Bloemfontein was organised as a British possession. A proclamation was issued offering protection to such Boers as would give a declaration of neutrality. It was the first instance of an error which seems to have gone hand in hand with Lord Roberts' brilliant strategy. He seems to have misapprehended the fundamental difference which exists between the defeat of organised opposition and the occupation of a conquered country. It proved impossible to give effect to the promises of the Proclamation. In innumerable instances neutral Boers, who had surrendered under its provisions, were attacked by the scattered forces of the enemy, and, finding themselves unprotected, joined the ranks of their belligerent fellow-countrymen. On many of these occasions their conduct was no doubt forced upon them; but a door was opened for fictitious surrenders to be recalled when the immediate danger from the British troops was withdrawn, and the country behind the advancing army remained in the occupation of covert enemies.

Before the actual forward movement began, an attempt was made to envelop a portion of De Wet's troops, who, a few days after their success at Reddersburg, had

Annexation of
the Orange
State.

Relief of We-
pener. April 25.

attempted a similar stroke upon Brabant's troops in Wepener. The Colonials, of whom the garrison consisted, being well led by Major Dalgety, and well supplied, found no great difficulty in repelling all assaults and in holding their position for seventeen days. Lord Roberts hoped to enclose and capture the Boer commandos who were thus held in a state of inactivity. Columns from several directions were turned upon them, and Ian Hamilton with a force consisting chiefly of mounted infantry pushed forward to Thabanchu to cut off their retreat. But De Wet, to whom every inhabitant served as an intelligence agent, found no difficulty on this occasion as on so many others in avoiding the snare, and withdrew into safety. But even this futile attempt was worked into the general plan. Ian Hamilton's force, now raised to some 13,000 men, became at once the right wing of the main army, which began its great advance on May 1.

The movement was extraordinarily rapid. It was Ian Hamilton's duty, acting on the right, to turn each position as it was occupied by the enemy. The strategy was completely successful. With nearly constant fighting, but without any general engagements, the army swept on. The enemy withdrew from position after position. Kroonstad, where the Government of the Orange State had taken refuge, was occupied on the 12th. A week's halt was allowed, and then the rapid march was resumed, till on the 26th and 27th the Vaal river was crossed and the Transvaal itself invaded. General French, and Ian Hamilton, who had now moved across the main army to the left flank, drove back the enemy from their last position at Doornkop on the Klip river, and on May 31st Lord Roberts with his troops, having marched 130 miles in seven days, entered Johannesburg. They were still 30 miles from the capital, which was known to be defended by very formidable works. Fortunately these were not held, and after a very slight resistance, on the 5th of June, the army marched into Pretoria. The second capital was thus occupied. Perhaps the pleasantest fruit of the victory was the liberation of the 130 officers from the Pretoria prison, and of the 3000 soldiers whom a rapid rush of a body of cavalry released from Waterval, some 14 miles to the north.

In his advance on Pretoria Lord Roberts had included the relief of Mafeking. There, from the first breaking out of the war, the little garrison under command of Colonel Baden-Powell had been offering a determined and spirited resistance. Attempts to relieve it had been made by Colonel Plumer from the north, but had not as yet proved successful. An expedition of mounted

Advance to
Pretoria, May 1
to June 5.

Relief of
Mafeking.

troops under Colonel Mahon was now organised with extreme secrecy, and succeeded in making its way into Mafeking on the 17th of May, and compelling the withdrawal of the besiegers. The gallant defence of the place and the resourceful character of the commander had fixed the attention of the people of England upon the little town. Its fate and the incidents of the siege had been watched with extraordinary interest, and the news of its relief was received with an outburst of riotous and enthusiastic joy somewhat out of proportion to the real importance of the event.

Although Lord Roberts had now secured the two capitals, which in an ordinary war of the European type would probably have brought the struggle to a conclusion, his position was one of great danger. The very rapidity of his success had aggravated the difficulty; for, unbroken by any crushing defeat, and wisely avoiding the temptation of holding out in their towns against an overwhelming enemy, the Boers had fallen back upon a form of warfare for which they were much better fitted than for the great operations of war. An unbeaten force of Free Staters occupied the north-east of the Orange State, under the command of De Wet, Olivier, and Prinsloo. Lord Roberts' communications (most slenderly held) were at once exposed to their dashing strategy, while their threatening approach to the colonial frontier on the south was with difficulty checked by the dispersed forces of Rundle and Brabant. And at the same time all around Pretoria Lord Roberts had to face the equally unbeaten forces of the Transvaal, ready at any moment to undertake offensive operations. The existence of the danger soon became evident. De Wet played havoc upon the railway, and for some days the force at Pretoria was absolutely isolated. His various attacks (at Lindley, May 31, at Roodival, June 7, and at Rhenoster, June 14) caused the unfortunate loss of a large body of Yeomanry which had been by some error left unsupported at Lindley, and of a regiment of Militia at Roodival; while the railway was entirely broken up and all communication with Cape Colony for the time rendered impossible. These events, disastrous and disheartening as they were, had however no effect upon the general course of the war. Before the advance of Lord Methuen from the west with a force of 6000 men, the active partisan leader retired to join the bulk of his compatriots in the north-east.

A second danger calling for more energetic treatment menaced the army at Pretoria. The presence of an unbeaten enemy within fifteen miles was a standing threat which could not be tolerated. On the 11th of June the army pushed out eastward, and one of the most

Second phase
of the war.

considerable battles of the war was fought at Diamond Hill. The operations covered a line of 16 miles, and resolved themselves into three distinct combats. Victory was secured and the position cleared by the success of Ian Hamilton upon the right. A combat of two days' duration, during which the guns were at one time in extreme jeopardy and saved only by brilliant cavalry charges, placed his force upon the plateau which crowned the Boer position. The gallant conduct of the 82nd Battery, which in the face of a tremendous fire took up and held a position within 1200 yards of the enemy, saved a situation which might otherwise have proved critical. Lord Roberts was now able to give his troops the necessary rest, and gradually to extend his right until Ian Hamilton, passing through Heilbron, could join hands with Buller, who with the Natal forces had been gradually working northwards after his successful passage of the mountains. The armies of the Orange State and the Transvaal were thus separated, and the ground was being cleared for separate action against them.

Both operations were successful. The first, as was natural because it tended to the safety of the communications, was directed against the Orange Staters who, under De Wet, Prinsloo, Olivier, and De Villiers were occupying the inaccessible hill country along the Basuto border between Ficksburg and Bethlehem. Against these troops six columns were converged, and gradually closed in upon them. At length, after constant fighting, the commandos were surrounded near Fouriesburg in the Caledon Valley, but not before the indefatigable De Wet had broken from them, rushed rapidly northward, and made his appearance upon the railway at Vredefort. Those who remained were driven to an unconditional surrender, on the 30th of July. It seemed however that Prinsloo had gone somewhat beyond his authority. At all events Olivier with 1500 men broke away from the main body and escaped. The surrendered troops numbered nearly 5000, with 3 guns. The great advantage strategically of this capture was the opening of the railway through Van Reenen's Pass into Natal, which enabled supplies to be brought direct from Durban.

Apart from local disturbances which were constantly arising in all parts of the country, the war had been at length concentrated in the Transvaal. But before moving forward, and while waiting for the arrival of fresh horses, Lord Roberts had to beat off attacks all round Pretoria. For General Botha appears to have intended to use the enforced idleness of the British commander to execute a combined attack upon the town. As a part of this plan De la Rey was sent

**Diamond Hill,
June 11.**

**Prinsloo's sur-
render at
Fouriesburg,
July 30.**

into the western districts, where he proved a most active and unconquerable enemy. So large a movement was really beyond the powers of the Boers; their assaults were insufficient to detain Lord Roberts. He only waited to secure his communications and to make one more attempt to capture De Wet and the commandos which had escaped from Fouriesburg. Close pursuit rendered De Wet's return southward impossible, and drove him to adopt what appeared the foolhardy determination to push through the Transvaal and join his friends to the north of Pretoria. For the moment it seemed that his enterprise must fail, and the hope of his capture rose high as he approached the Magaliesberg ridge to the west of Pretoria, which still separated him from the district in the occupation of De la Rey. There were but three passes over the ridge, and they were believed to be in British hands. Methuen stopped him on the west, Kitchener and Broadwood were pursuing him from the south, Pretoria closed the east. From this desperate position however he again managed to extricate himself, and with ex-President Steyn, who had constantly accompanied him, escaped from the trap. He sent Steyn eastward; and after awhile found means to return, with a few followers, over the mountains into the Orange State.

De Wet was for the time no longer formidable; he had lost nearly all his baggage and supplies during the long and close pursuit; and though De la Rey was still active in the west, it was now possible to undertake what was regarded as a final movement. General Buller came up from the south, while Lord Roberts pushed along the railway line to meet him. The same strategy was adopted as on the advance to Pretoria. The army, occupying a spread of nearly 30 miles, consisted as before of a centre and wings thrown far out to the right and left. It was not without some fighting, notably at Bergendal, that the line was gradually cleared. On the 28th of August Buller occupied Machadodorp, where for many weeks President Kruger and the movable Government of the Transvaal had been living in railway carriages, ready as the President declared to move westward. On the 30th the British prisoners who had been kept at Noitgedacht were liberated, and it was determined to advance against Lydenburg, where it had been always thought possible that the Boers would make their final stand. Again there was opposition, again it faded before flank attacks, and on the 6th of September Lydenburg was occupied. Five days later General Buller was as far north as Spitzkop, while more to the south Barberton, the great railway junction, was occupied by French. On the 11th President Kruger

**Attempts to
capture De
Wet.**

**Lord Roberts'
final move-
ment.**

arrived at Lorenzo Marques, having at length despaired of his country and determined to withdraw to Europe. Confused fighting still continued in many directions, especially in the west. But the occupation (September 24) of Komatipoort, the frontier station on the railway, and the withdrawal into Portuguese territory of General Piennaar with 2000 men marked the close of the first stage of the war.

In fact Lord Roberts believed, and declared his belief, that the war was ended. It was under this impression that on the 1st of September he had issued an important proclamation pointing out the hopelessness of the Boer cause, and threatening strong repressive measures if, the real war being ended, the defence should sink into a wild and irregular guerilla warfare. His attitude, and his declaration that the war was ended, in the light of subsequent events was open to much adverse criticism. Yet in fact it was true. If by war is meant the struggle of armies bound by the habits and practices which attend civilized warfare, the war was at an end. But to conquer in a war, and to conquer a brave people determined not to be subdued are two very different things. For nearly two years longer the whole power of England was kept upon the stretch in the effort of its armies to occupy and hold the land which they had nominally won. Indeed before that consummation could be arrived at, the often repeated demand for unconditional surrender had to be withdrawn. It was upon terms by no means dishonourable to themselves that the fighting remnant of Boer patriots at length accepted the supremacy of Great Britain.

The second act, if it may be so called, of the war, the gradual acquisition and occupation of the country, was left to Lord Kitchener, whose complete and elaborate military processes well fitted him for such a duty. It was only by the erection of lines of blockhouses, connected by thousands of miles of barbed wire entanglement, that the conquered country was gradually appropriated. This work, which at last convinced the Boers of the impossibility of further resistance and led to the conclusion of peace (June 1, 1902), and the still more interesting work of restoration of the devastated country and the repatriation of the captive and exiled inhabitants, carried out apparently with exemplary care and wisdom by Lord Milner and those working under him, do not fall within the limits of this history.

It was in the belief that his work was fully accomplished that Lord Roberts returned to England; and it was as the successful vindicator of the honour of the empire that he

Supposed end
of the war.

The recon-
struction left
to Lord
Milner.

Lord Roberts'
return.

was received by the aged Queen. He came home to have honours heaped on him. He was made an earl; he was given the Order of the Garter. He was summoned to a special audience at Windsor. Always popular, he now became the darling hero of the people, and was received wherever he went with enthusiastic welcome. It was not merely his popularity and his success which made his homecoming welcome. He was at once to take up the office of Commander-in-Chief, which increasing infirmities compelled Lord Wolseley to resign, and in that office great things were both hoped and expected from him. Successful though on the whole the army had been, there had been times of most depressing disaster. Nor could the nation flatter itself that the organising authority on which the action of the army depended was at all to be trusted. There were incidents enough in the course of the war to fill men's minds with a total want of confidence in the administration. Even the speeches of Lord Wolseley himself tended to the belief that reconstitution in some form or other was much wanted. Though he assumed the usual official tone in parts of his speeches, declared his admiration of what has been done, and his belief in the army system as established by Mr. Cardwell, he had admitted the difficulty under which the Commander-in-Chief laboured from the subordination of his opinion to the exigencies of politics or of the Treasury. As the new Secretary at War, Mr. St. John Brodrick, soon after his appointment in November, declared that he hoped his own experience as Under Secretary might "prove a useful adjunct to those inspirations which, after the greatest campaign of our generation, would be afforded him by the greatest soldier of our age," it was expected that the voice of the new Commander-in-Chief would prove more potent in the great process of reorganisation than had apparently been the case with his predecessor.

The delay of the Government to carry out according to promise a searching public inquiry into the conduct of the War Office during the earlier months of the war, caused much disappointment. Public disapproval was strongly expressed and seemed to be increasing; and in this may probably be found one of the reasons which induced Lord Salisbury to dissolve Parliament in September, at a moment when circumstances seemed scarcely to justify such a step. His majority was still unbroken, and there were reasons connected with the registration which should have postponed the dissolution. There seemed in fact no real ground for dissolving Parliament. Yet the Government can scarcely be blamed for taking advantage of any opportunity to secure for themselves a lengthened

Expected re-
form at the
War Office.

General elec-
tion, Oct. 1900.

tenure of office in which to complete the war they had begun. It was natural that they should wish to stifle under the wave of enthusiasm caused by Lord Roberts' success the rising voice of discontent at the serious miscarriages which from time to time had marked the conduct of the war. Therefore, although the dissolution seemed unnecessary, for there were practically but few of the opposition leaders who were inclined to recommend any other course than the prosecution of the war to a triumphant close, the Government succeeded in giving to their appeal to the people the character of a demand for a fresh mandate to complete the war. It suited the Unionists to raise the cry, to which Mr. Chamberlain somewhat unjustifiably lent his support, that "to vote against the Government was to vote for the Boers," a cry which found an echo in the prevalent sentiment, and secured to the party in power a fresh tenure of office and a Parliamentary majority of more than 130.

It was thought advisable to make a few changes in the Ministry. Mr. St. John Brodrick, who had shown some practical capacity and some debating power in his position as Under Secretary, was placed at the War Office. Lord Selborne, whose love of politics had led him at one time to suggest that Peers should if they pleased be allowed to seek seats in the Lower House, and who was a man of much strong sense, was put at the Admiralty. The world was not surprised that Lord Salisbury should confess the approach of age and withdraw from the personal charge of the Foreign Office; but it was not without some misgiving and some astonishment that it saw the vacant post occupied by Lord Lansdowne, the man whose management of the War Office had certainly not been regarded generally as a successful piece of work. The changes necessitated the withdrawal from public life of several of the old leaders who had during the generation which was passing away played a prominent part among the Unionists. Of these the most important was Mr. Goschen, whose administration of the Admiralty had always won the approbation both of the service and of the country at large, and whose consistent maintenance of his own views and courageous and outspoken if somewhat perfervid patriotism had gained for him the general respect. It was with flattering words of kindness and regret that the Queen accepted the retirement of her old and faithful servant, and in a touching phrase of sympathy told him that she too was beginning to weary of the burden of duty she had so long borne.

In fact the dark shadow of the approaching end was already closing upon the aged Queen. Early in January 1901 she received Lord

Roberts to a second private audience, and, though with some difficulty, for several hours found strength to carry on the conversation and to hear from him of the great deeds of her troops. A few days later ominous bulletins warned the nation of its approaching loss, and on the 22nd the sad news was spread that the life of the great Queen had ended. Never perhaps did the death of a Monarch call forth such deep-felt and personal sorrow.

The extraordinary success with which, in a way which finds no parallel in the history of crowned heads, she had managed to take her people into her confidence and to make them the sharers of her sorrows and joys, had endeared her to every class of the nation. Her ready sympathy with every form of distress, and the kind and gracious words with which she had associated herself with many instances of even private sorrow, had touched in a very peculiar manner the domestic sentiment so strong among the English people. There was scarcely a family which did not feel as though they had lost a relative or friend. The strange, almost inexplicable, feeling of loyalty found in her an object on which it could lavish itself without that touch of incongruity which so often attends it, and could gather fresh food even in an age when criticism is apt to undermine all sentiment.

The Queen's power of exciting and feeling sympathy, though an invaluable element of greatness in a constitutional monarch, was by no means her only gift. It was The Queen's death, Jan. 22, 1901. Appreciation of the Queen. alluded to by all the statesmen whose duty it was to give utterance to the national feeling when the new Parliament assembled. But in every case there was mingled with it a recognition of the greatness of the Queen in the execution of her duties as a ruler. The world is too ready to confuse the constitutional monarch with the *roi fainéant*, to regard him as an ornamental appendage, whose duties are chiefly social, and whose energies are wasted in bestowing an air of grace and dignity to national celebrations and traditional ceremonies; the real work of government is, according to common belief, entirely in the hands of the responsible Ministers. If this is ever true, it was certainly not true in the case of Queen Victoria. The work of the constitutional monarch is of necessity behind the veil; it is none the less vast in amount and charged with the gravest importance. It is only now and then, when a biography of some great Minister or intimate friend of the sovereign affords a passing glimpse of the inner working of the Government, that the true position of the Head of the Empire is made known to the world. Such a revelation comes as a surprise. The

amount of labour required of the sovereign and the influence which he is able to exert, are nothing short of astonishing. No monarch ever discharged the onerous duties of the crown more conscientiously or more loyally than Queen Victoria. She was kept informed of all the intricacies of party warfare. Day by day the Prime Minister was required to furnish her with a written account of the political situation and of the course of the debates in Parliament. Every paper of importance was laid before her. And with her it was no mere question of the appending of her signature; she required of her servants an exact and complete explanation of every subject presented to her. There was no step taken, whatever the complexion of the Ministry might be, without her full knowledge. There was no difficulty in which she was not consulted; there were few in which her advice was not of the greatest value. Again and again hitches in the Cabinet were smoothed out by her resourceful suggestions; more than once the knots of international diplomacy were unravelled by her skill. And although she was consistently faithful to that Ministry which the desire of the nation had for the time placed in office, there is no question but that their action was influenced by her personal opinion, and by the wisdom which was the fruit of her long experience.

Mr. Balfour's
speech,
Jan. 25.

It was with a deep recognition of this side of the Queen's character that Mr. Balfour, in moving the Address in reply to a message from the King, closed his speech with these words: "It is not given to a constitutional monarch to signalise his reign by any great isolated action. The effect of a constitutional sovereign, great as it is, is produced by the slow, constant, and cumulative results of a great ideal and a great example; and of that great ideal and that great example Queen Victoria surely was the first of all constitutional monarchs whom the world has yet seen." After dwelling impressively on her life of continuous labour, he added: "Short as was the interval between the last public document and her final rest, it was yet long enough to clog the wheels of administration; and when I saw the vast mass of untouched documents which awaited the hand of the sovereign of this country to deal with, it was brought vividly before my mind how admirable was the unostentatious patience with which for sixty-three years, through sorrow, through suffering, in moments of weariness, in moments it may be of despondency, she carried on without intermission her share in the government of this great empire. She had her reward in the undying affection and immemorial recollection of all her subjects. She passed away without an enemy in the world, for even

those who loved not England loved her. No such reign, no such ending has been known in our history before."

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, in seconding the motion, alluded to the personal character of the Queen. "There was between her and her people a friendly, tender, almost Campbell-Bannerman. familiar, mutual understanding, which it is almost impossible to put into words. Who can measure the strength which the existence of a relation such as this between the Sovereign and her people must have given through all these years to this kingdom and this empire?"

Lord Rosebery, in speaking to the governors of the Royal Scottish Hospital in London, on the 30th of January, said: Lord Rosebery. "I venture to say that there is not an intelligent home throughout the world that has not been profoundly moved by the death of this illustrious woman. Probably every subject in Great Britain realises that he has lost his greatest and his best friend. But they do not understand of what enormous weight in the councils of the world we are deprived by the death of our late Sovereign." And then after speaking of her vast personal influence in every country in Europe, he asked, "Can we not realise, then, what a force the personal influence of such a Sovereign must have been in the troubled councils of Europe? And when, as we know, that influence was always given for peace, for freedom, and for good government, we feel that not merely ourselves but all the world has lost one of its best friends. She saw that the essential dignity of the throne does not lie in pomps and palaces, but in the dignity of supreme example; and the watchwords of her life, so far as we could discern them, were duty and sympathy."

Her personal and religious character was well summed up by the Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking in the House of Archbishop of Canterbury. Lords on the 25th of January. "For myself it is impossible to look back over her reign without a deep sense of gratitude to God for having given us such a Sovereign to reign over us, a Sovereign whose powers of statesmanship and powers of advising those who had the government in their hands have been already spoken of, but whose influence as a woman, and I may add as a truly religious woman, was far greater than anything which could be exercised by the wisest statesman. Her influence, the character of her Court, the character of the domestic life (of which her subjects were allowed to know something) had a penetrating power which reached far beyond the possibility of our being able to trace it. There can be no question that all society has been the better because the Queen has reigned."

The striking words of Lord Salisbury form a fitting close to this

chorus of appreciative love and admiration. "We owe her gratitude in every direction, for her influence in elevating the people, for her power with foreign Courts and Sovereigns to remove difficulties and misapprehension which sometimes might have been dangerous; but above all things we owe her gratitude for this, that by a happy dispensation her reign has coincided with that great change which has come over the political structure of this country and the political instincts of its people. She has bridged over that great interval which separates old England from new England. Other nations may have had to pass through similar trials, but have seldom passed through them so peaceably, so easily, and with so much prosperity and success as we have. I think that future historians will look to the Queen's reign as the boundary which separates the two states of England, England which has changed so much, and recognise that we have undergone the change with constant increase of public prosperity, without any friction to endanger the peace or stability of our civil life, and at the same time with a constant expansion of an empire which every year grows more and more powerful. We owe all these blessings to the tact, the wisdom, the passionate patriotism, and the incomparable judgment of the Sovereign whom we deplore."

It is consonant with her readiness to apprehend the national feeling, so well described by Lord Salisbury, that the imperial instinct had of late years been strongly roused in her. She loved to think of herself as the Empress of India. The growth and expansion of the empire appealed to her closely, and whatever may have been her personal sorrows or her personal weariness, the last year of her life must have been full of satisfaction to her as a Queen. Almost the last Bill to which she put her signature was that for creating the great Commonwealth of Australia. The position of England in South Africa must have appeared to her assured. Her two great Jubilees of 1887 and 1897 had foreshadowed the close connection of the Colonies with the mother country, which the events of the Boer War had so thoroughly realised. The risk, which we cannot but suppose to have been great in her eyes, of some disturbance at least in the unity of the empire by the triumph of Home Rule, seemed to have disappeared. She had been able to visit Ireland in the spring of 1900 and to receive there a friendly, almost enthusiastic, welcome; while her reception in her state progresses through London must have told her very plainly how deep-rooted and sincere was the love of her people, how strong the first link in the chain which bound the empire together.

The eloquent words of those to whose lot it fell to express the

Lord Salisbury's speech.

national feeling on the Queen's death were conceived in an optimistic spirit befitting the solemn occasion. A spirit of hope and self-reliance well becomes the leaders of a people at the opening of a new era. Yet there are certain facts in nearly every sphere of English life which must lead the observer to ask himself whether the late reign, great as it was, is to be regarded as a beginning or as an end; whether it marks a step in the development of even greater progress, or the summit of achievement in which signs of deterioration are already visible. The enormous increase of the empire, and the incredible accumulation of wealth, are themselves causes of deep anxiety. Whether Great Britain is still capable of expanding, or even of maintaining its existing expansion, or whether the hour has arrived when, as in other empires, the very greatness of its acquisitions and its wealth tends to overstrain its strength, and leads towards a course of decadence, is a question not to be hurriedly decided.

The province of history is neither to prophesy nor to encourage, but to note characteristic facts and tendencies. The one thing which makes itself obvious in the closing years of the late reign is the setting in of a strong tide of reaction, visible in nearly every branch of life. It is impossible to say whether this arises from a wise effort to check the over rapid growth of democracy, or merely from the swing of the pendulum and the reversion of popular feeling to the ordinary unthinking impulses of human nature, after a period dominated by principles often abstract in character and requiring much thought for their comprehension. The existence of the reaction however remains a fact. Ambition and the love of rule, belief in extended empire, in restricted and selfish commerce, in the superiority of a military life, in the value and importance of the privileged classes, and the substitution of symbolism for higher spiritual creeds, are marked characteristics of the time, and are exactly those things which the last century prided itself on having left behind.

The desire for the acquisition of territory, the belief in the advantages of extended, rather than concentrated and well-ruled dominion, which prevailed in the eighteenth century, has again made its appearance. Spheres of influence, chartered companies, annexation of savage lands, reappear as prominent features of political life. The public has again become nervously sensitive at any fancied loss of prestige, a well-known feature of what is generally spoken of as a bygone time. The whole system of commercial economy has begun to be questioned. The free-trade doctrines, under which the country has grown great, are spoken of in the leading organs

Causes for anxiety.

Signs of reaction.

Desire for increased territory.

of the Press as "antiquated shibboleths." The principles of the great financiers, who for many years have been regarded with practical unanimity as unquestioned authorities, are forced again to pass through the crucible of inquiry. The exclusion, as far as possible, of foreign competition is becoming a widespread object of desire. Nor is this exclusiveness confined to commerce. Those very combinations which had their origin in the democratic desire for the improvement of the working classes have in too many instances become institutions directed chiefly to the shortening of the working hours of the favoured few, and the exclusion from employment of all who decline to join their societies.

But perhaps the most obvious signs of the reaction are to be found in the changed relation between the two Houses of the Lords. Parliament, and in the attitude of the English Church. Only a few years before the close of the reign it was a fixed belief that the centre of political power lay entirely in the House of Commons. So completely was this the case, that any opposition on the part of the Lords came almost as a surprise, and elicited the strongest denunciations. The abolition or the thorough reform of the Upper House was thought to be the best party cry for a general election. Under the skilful hands of Lord Salisbury the position has been largely changed. Places of trust abroad have been uniformly placed in the hands of young noblemen; the most important posts in the Ministry are held by members of the Upper House. Its constitutional position has been completely vindicated. Whether for good or evil the political power of the privileged class has been restored. Unquestionably the estimation of the House of Commons has been lowered; obstruction, disorder, the want of party discipline, and the disintegration of parties, have gone far to deprive it of its commanding position. It is unfortunate that the influence thus lost has passed into the hands of a class which represents little except property, and that thus there seems some danger of the constitution degenerating into a mere plutocracy. Going hand in hand with the vast accumulation of wealth, this political movement has produced a state of things in which the mere possession of riches has become a source of political and social power.

When the majority of the English clergy are avowedly determined to reproduce the ritual of the seventeenth century or of an earlier time, when a considerable number even of the laity reject with indignation the time-honoured appellation of Protestant, it is needless to enlarge upon the reactionary spirit which is visible in the Church of England. It would appear to be a natural consequence of this, that in spite of many well-meant efforts of individual prelates

and clergymen to soften the line which separates the Christian churches, there was never a period when the antagonism between the English Church and the Nonconformists was more strongly marked. It does not tend to the healing of this dislocation that a large body of enlightened Churchmen have adopted in many respects the liberal views which marked the Broad Church in the middle of the last century. Liberality of doctrine and of criticism are useless as solvents of religious differences so long as they go hand-in-hand with medieval ritual and claims to exclusive privilege.

Another point which must be noticed, and which is probably dependent upon the increased wealth of the country, is the extraordinary love of amusement. It is difficult to resist the belief that this excited pursuit of relaxation has been accompanied with a loss of serious interest in the more real work of life. The steady perseverance which comes from a keen interest in the work in hand, whatever the work may be, appears to be lessening. Work seems to be regarded chiefly as an evil, to be limited to certain not very long hours, the remainder of the day and night being devoted to amusement. Probably in gay society this has been always more or less the case; a black mark has always been set against what is called "shop." But the sharp line dividing the real objects of life, the labour and employment by which men live, from those lighter pursuits which are supposed to make life more pleasant, has been constantly extended, and has been adopted by class after class until it has now reached the ordinary working man. The effect of this has been remarkable. The love of pleasure and excitement, acting in connection with some other causes, has played a great part in changing the entire character of English rural life; the agricultural labourer of the last century has almost disappeared. There are many villages in which young men or even men of middle age are scarcely to be found; the work is carried on by old men, and by lads waiting their opportunity to follow their predecessors into the cities. The fresh young countrymen appear to find no difficulty in getting good and lucrative employment in the cities. But there seems to be a considerable body of evidence to support the view that town life produces in them a gradual deterioration, and that after a few generations they become weak and puny. The evil is one which reproduces itself; it is the place of the weakling which is occupied by the new arrival, while his predecessor is too apt to slide into the class which just keeps itself alive in casual employment, or lower still either by unfitness or unwillingness to work into the class of the habitually unemployed. The tendency to drift away from the country to the

towns seems irresistible; the efforts constantly made to replace the labourer on the soil have hitherto proved ineffective. Taken together with the changed conditions of agriculture, and the fall of prices consequent upon foreign competition, it has gone far to deprive England of its character as an agricultural country, and still further to confirm it in its position as a great industrial centre depending entirely upon its manufactures and its trade.

Desertion of country for town.
 A smaller but not unimportant sign of the reaction towards the habits of past times is to be found in the change which has taken place in the estimation of the military life. No doubt this is largely due to the outbreak of a considerable war. War, which is in fact a return to the crudest forms of savage life, addresses itself with extraordinary power to the commonest sentiments and passions of mankind. The craft and skill of the warrior, his strength and endurance, speak directly to that very large part of man's nature which has immediate reference to his physical frame. The warlike temperament is ingrained in the English nation, and in times of peace finds its expression in the mimic warfare of those athletic sports which, whether wisely or unwisely, fill so large a space in the interests of the ordinary Englishman. But civilisation, the introduction, that is, of mind into the life of society, tends to relegate to its proper place this essentially physical attraction. It begins to be recognised, as civilisation advances, that the arts of peace as they are called, the management of men and the conquest of the forces of nature, stand altogether upon a higher plane. The duty of defence, and the virtues which are called out by war, are acknowledged, the great military deeds of their ancestors play an ennobling and inspiring part in the formation of patriotic citizens; but war is regarded as an unmitigated evil, and the actual profession of arms as a necessary but not very desirable branch in the general system of division of labour. England had advanced far on this line of thought. To many minds it was felt that the greatest misfortune which could happen to the country would have been the introduction of what was spoken of as Continental militarism. England did not stand alone in this. The very countries which felt obliged to maintain them, were conscious that these vast armaments were an anachronism. At the instigation of the Czar of Russia an important Conference was held at the Hague, with the hope of making possible the diminution of armies and the establishment of arbitration. Though some regulation of the methods of war tending to lessen its miseries resulted, and though the general desire to avoid war produced a machinery by which

its outbreak might occasionally be avoided, the effect of the Conference was not very pronounced. It was evident that war was still at times inevitable. Unfortunately just such a war, which to the majority appeared inevitable, and which called out a general enthusiasm and self-devotion unknown for several generations, obliterated for the time the more thoughtful view. The excellence of the military life has become a constant theme for eulogy. Conscription has been freely talked of, not only as necessary but as desirable, and men have fallen back to what must be regarded as an opinion properly belonging to the Middle Ages, that the highest and noblest of professions is that of a soldier.

Admiration for military life.
 Taking a wider view, the changed position of England among the countries of the world is striking. Prosperity has produced its inevitable results. The earliest country to make use of its natural advantages and its political circumstances, England had become the workshop of the world. Its coal and iron, its easy command of the powers of distribution, and a period of inventive industry fostered by the self-confidence consequent upon the position won in the European wars, and subsequently fed by its advantageous fiscal system, had secured for England an unquestioned pre-eminence as a manufacturing nation. But neither inventive industry nor the skill of the craftsman is the monopoly of any one country. Success engenders both rivalry and imitation. One nation after another found it possible to create for itself those articles for which it was once dependent upon England, and not only to supply its own wants, but to enter into competition in the markets of the world. Rapidity and ease of locomotion has moreover tended to equalise natural advantages. If the liberal and sagacious principles of universal free-trade have found but little favour and few followers, an exclusive fiscal policy has at least attracted capital to protected industries, and thus supplied further means for carrying on the commercial rivalry. England now stands only as one among many great manufacturing nations. It may be perhaps (though this cannot be said with certainty) that in this new attitude England has been too much inclined to rest on its old successes, to ignore the constant onward movement necessary if it is to hold its own in this new position, and to give too little attention to the new powers with which education and science invest the practical pursuit of industrial invention. Though the bulk of British commerce is still enormous, though the shipping business of the world is largely in British hands, it is undeniable that the ingenuity of the Anglo-Saxon has found its highest expression of late years in America,

Failure of the Hague Conference.

Changed position among other countries.

and that it is in Germany that industrial science has found its chief triumphs.

These facts have for some time been apparent, and have naturally disquieted the minds of thinking men. And apart from the obvious advantages to be derived from improved education at home, to many men there has appeared to be an advantage of which England has as yet scarcely made trial in the vast extension of her colonial dominion. It is this which lies at the bottom of that imperial idea of which so much has been said, and in the name of which so much is suggested. At the close of the reign of Queen Victoria the idea was still unformulated. The value set upon the colonies had varied much. There had been times when to all appearance the prevalent feeling was weariness at the necessity of ruling them, and a desire to get rid, as far as possible, of all responsibility connected with them. This feeling took shape in the policy of giving the colonies the largest rights of self-government that were compatible with a maintenance of the union. The policy proved to be a wise one. Much of the immediate responsibility of the Home Government was removed; measures of detail, often a cause of friction, were settled by the colonies themselves. At the same time their more independent attitude lent itself to an increase of general prosperity. At a subsequent time the carelessness with which colonial interests had been regarded gave place to a somewhat higher appreciation of their value, which increased as the idea of the imperial responsibility of England began to gain ground. The practical form given to this change of view was closely analogous to that which had preceded it. It was indeed impossible to go backward, or in any way diminish the large measure of self-government which had been already granted. The efforts of those who were most interested in the matter were directed to grouping in federations those colonies which had hitherto been isolated, and thus forming what were, in all but in name, independent states. It was found possible to remove the difficulties which beset such a scheme, both in the case of the Dominion of Canada and the Commonwealth of Australia. Racial jealousy had proved an impassable obstacle in the way of a similar success in South Africa.

The outbreak of the South African War afforded a proof that the policy pursued by England had been successful in attaching the colonies to the mother country. The constitutional freedom so largely granted had not been a useless gift. The great self-governing colonies vied with each other in their readiness to

Value of the Colonies.

Self-government given to the Colonies.

Loyalty of the Colonies.

assist in supplying the need of Great Britain. Their volunteer troops won for themselves the character of first-rate military material. It was only natural that this fine exhibition of loyalty should lend strength to the idea of the value and possibility of a great unified British empire.

It is not at first sight clear to the ordinary onlooker how colonial federation can lead to the realisation of the hopes of advanced imperialists. Surrounded by a group of self-governing states with only the slightest constitutional connection with the mother country, the exercise of imperial authority by Great Britain in any real sense would seem to be impossible. At best the empire must be merely a federation of states, in which Great Britain may for a while hold the first place. Such federations do not come into existence unless reciprocal advantages can be acquired by the federated states. If Great Britain is to maintain a really imperial position, the motive for closer union as far as the colonies are concerned does not appear a strong one. They already possess in fact all the advantages of independence; the mother country has little or nothing more to give them except a name. The sacrifices which such a federation imply would fall wholly on the colonies. And, beyond the sentiment of empire, the feeling of brotherhood, and that elevation which attends the consciousness of membership of a great nation, there seems nothing particularly attractive in being called upon to contribute largely towards the general defence, or to change fiscal arrangements to suit the mother country, or to take the risk of being involved in complications arising from events on the other side of the world. On the other hand, if a federation of a more equal character is desired, it does not seem an attractive programme for the mother country that, for the purpose of maintaining its predominant position in the world, which may or may not be threatened, it should surrender some of its deepest convictions, and change systems on which it has grown great, with the doubtful advantage of remaining the head of a federation in which the very fact that these changes have been forced upon it will already have shown that it no longer holds an unquestioned predominance.

Means may perhaps be found to obviate the apparent obstacles and to establish between England and its self-governing colonies different relations to those now existing. If so, and if a united empire, whether distinctly federative or of any other sort, comes into existence, the close of the reign of Queen Victoria will be the close of a complete page of history. In the future it will be the

Doubtful advantages of federation.

The British empire.

British Empire and not Great Britain which will occupy the attention of the historian. The words of necessity imply a momentous change.

It remains to be seen whether the movement, which aiming apparently at resuscitating on the broadest basis a national life which in its present form has reached its culminating point and is in risk of sinking, will succeed at all; and granting that it succeeds, whether it will bring with it sooner or later that sort of disintegration which, as the lessons of history seem to show, attends the removal of the seat of national life from the centre to the extremities, or whether it will create a still vaster and nobler world-power than Great Britain has as yet ever been.

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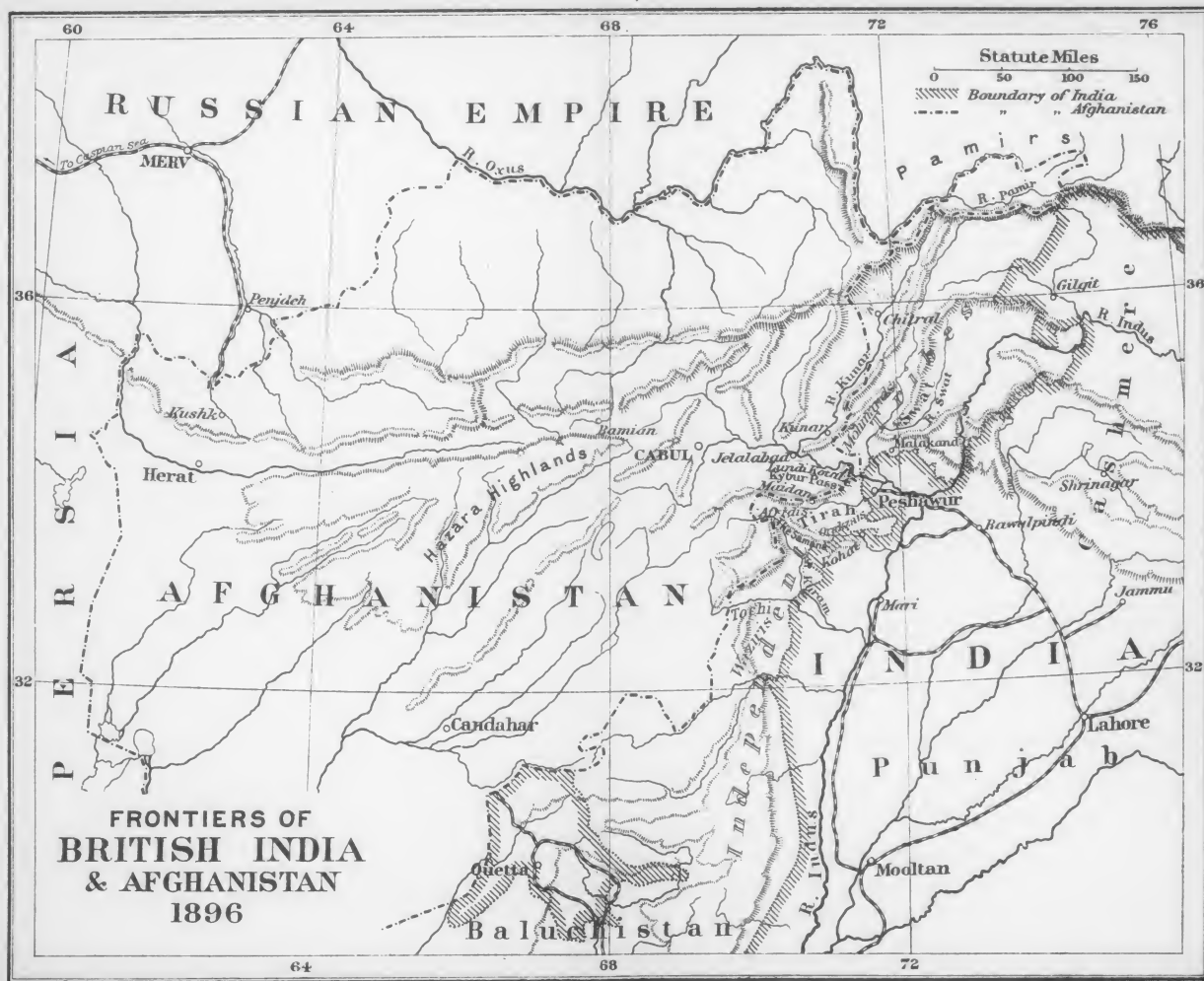
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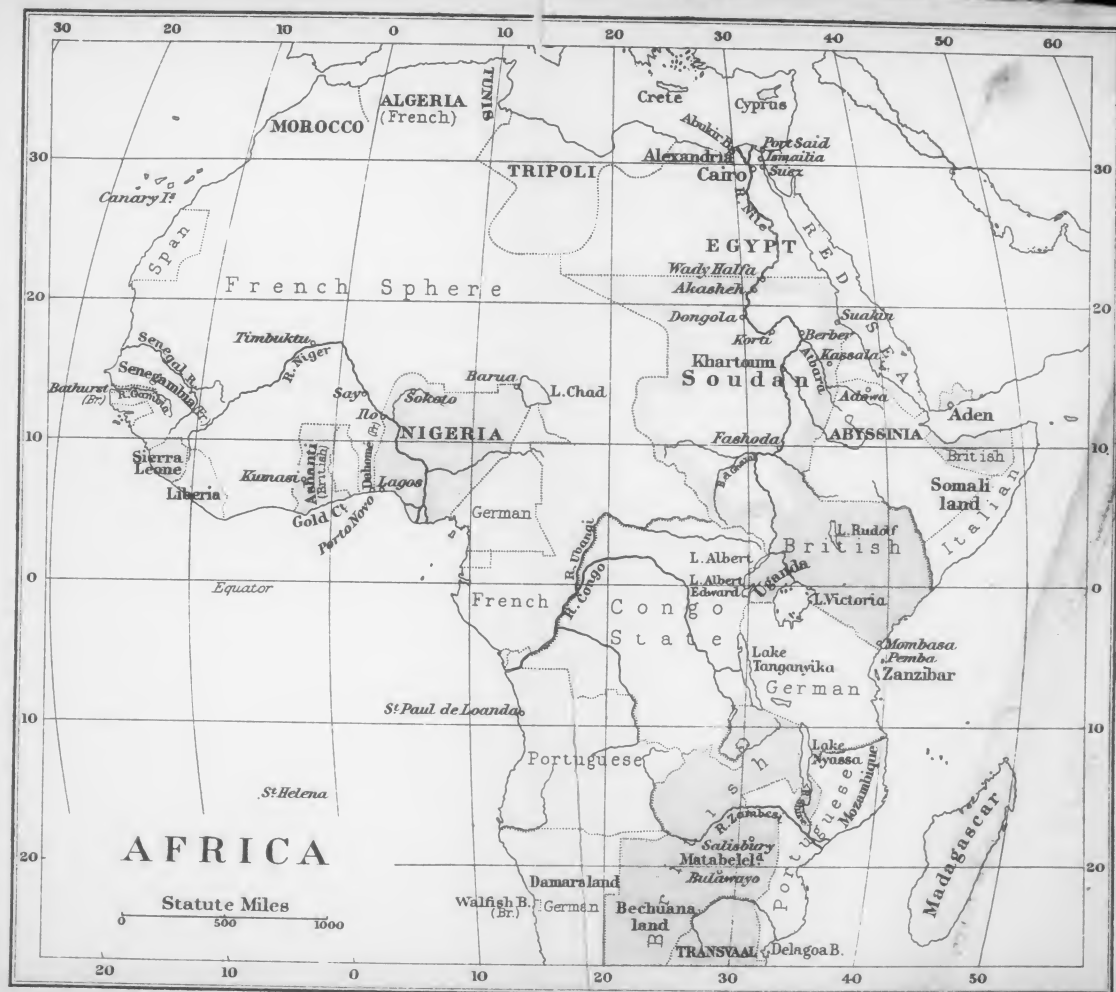
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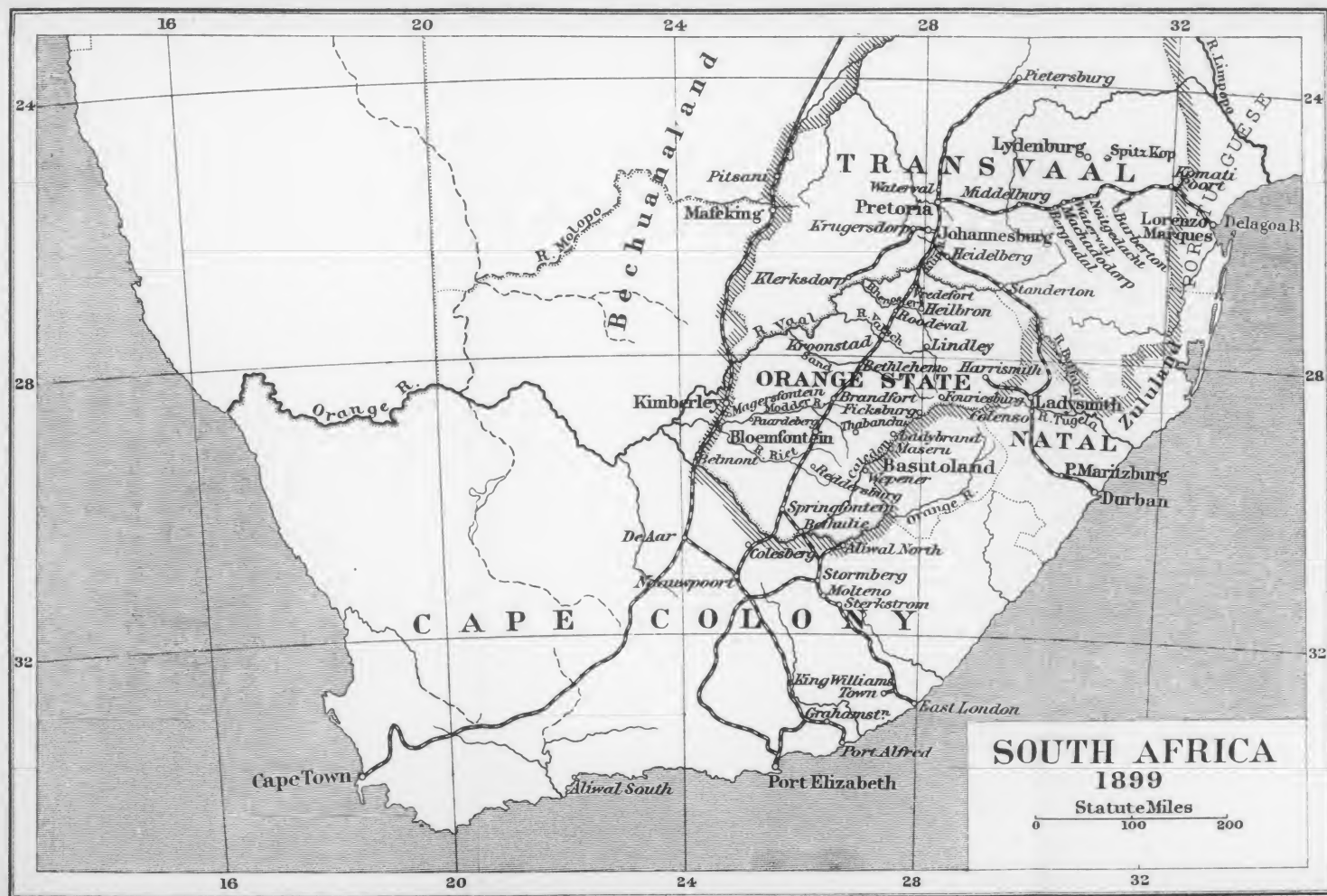
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